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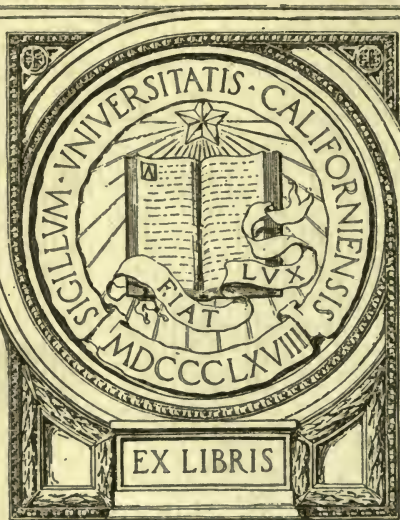
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ENGLAND ON THE WITNESS STAND



THE ANGLO-GERMAN CASE TRIED BY
A JURY OF ENGLISHMEN

THE TWELVE JURORS

ENGLAND SELF-REVEALED

BY BERNARD SHAW, SIR HENRY LUCY, "LONDON TIMES," ETC.

HOW THE WAR CAME

"THE LABOR LEADER"

BRITAIN AND THE WAR; A STUDY IN DIPLOMACY

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Schrader, Frederick Franklin, 1857-

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"This war is being supported by sham arguments and hypocritical appeals to sentiment. Its pretended cause, 'The Neutrality of Belgium,' is non-existent. Its real cause: The wish to beat the German navy."—C. H. Norman, "Britain and the War."

1915

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"Russia can afford to wait. So can France. Germany cannot. Germany must see to its own safety, and Prince Bismarck cannot reasonably be expected to pass his declining days impotently watching the silent conspiracy for the silent growth of the power of France and the power of Russia against the Fatherland."—LONDON DAILY STANDARD, Feb. 17, 1887.

INTRODUCTION

BY FREDERICK F. SCHRADER

THE English nation is composed of two strong racial elements—the Anglo-Saxon, honest, truthful, outspoken and liberty-loving; and the Norman-French, taciturn, enterprising in the cause of conquest, ruthless in the employment of brute force and expert in hypocritical subtleties.

This is a document on the war by Englishmen living in England. The implication that it may possibly be the inspiration of German-Americans cannot lie against it. The articles therein embraced, clear, authentic, fair, printed and circulated in England in editions of tens of thousands, defend the cause of Germany and Austria-Hungary more eloquently than anything that could be written by German sympathizers, or the alleged "German lobby," of which the New York papers have had so much to say. They reveal the true image of Sir Edward Grey, and trace the historic and political causes leading to the war with a clearness that has found no counterpart in anything published in the United States.

It will be contended by those who specialize in deflecting the viewpoint which seeks to place the case of Germany and Austria-Hungary in its true aspect, that sundry of the arguments in this pamphlet emanate from members of the English Independent Labor Party. But it must be borne in mind that a leader of this party sat in the Asquith cabinet until the outbreak of the war, and that without the Independent Labor Party the government of Asquith, Grey, Lloyd George and Churchill would topple to the ground. In short, the Independent Labor Party has been the bulwark of Grey's power.

It has been insolently assumed by a part of the American press, for reasons that have never been satisfactorily explained, that there is but one point of view as to the European war.

This inexplicable partisanship in behalf of England and her allies has been so pronounced from the day war was declared that the American people have become fairly indoctrinated with the sophistries about

"German militarism," "Germany's violation of Belgium's neutrality," "German atrocities" and "Germany's encroachment upon the liberty of nations." Any attempt by right-thinking Americans to form an independent opinion has been, and continues to be, ruthlessly, violently, brutally throttled by the partisan press.

It is surely significant, then, that Englishmen themselves should declare that "Belgium in particular, and national liberty and public law had nothing whatever to do with the *making* of the war." Herein England enjoys a peculiar distinction over Germany. Liebknecht is the only public man in Germany who has criticised his government.

We have yet to see a New York paper printed in the English language manifesting a spirit of fair play half way comparable with the impartial presentment of the case which characterizes the English writers and speakers herein quoted. They refute the sophistries, the familiar as well as favorite stock arguments of many apologists for the Allies, and incidentally put to shame such eminent men as Col. George Harvey and Prof. Eliot, who in their zeal for "the mother country" appear to have forgotten that they are Americans.

We present the Anglo-German case as tried by a jury of Englishmen, without taking editorial liberties with certain opinions and expressions censuring Germany and Austria-Hungary, for which an irrepressible national bias must charitably be held responsible.

We leave it to the American people who read it to render judgment.

NEW YORK, May 1, 1915.

ENGLAND ON THE WITNESS STAND

England Self-Revealed

PREMIER ASQUITH, SIR HENRY LUCY, BERNARD SHAW
AND THE LONDON "TIMES" TESTIFY.

"If I justify myself my own mouth shall condemn me."—Job 9: 20.

WHEN England declared war upon Germany she gave as her fundamental reason the invasion by Germany of Belgium territory. "We are fighting to fulfill a solemn international obligation," declared Mr. Asquith in the House of Commons, "to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed." England's publicists and diplomatists announced that not only had England no desire to make war but that the war in which she engaged was unexpected and unprepared for. While this pretext gained credence and unquestioned sympathy throughout the world, the truth concerning England's actual aims and purposes and her reasons in going to war have gradually become known. *By statements which have slipped from the mouths of certain high officials, as well as by a comparison of certain diplomatic statements and correspondence, it is now clear that England expected to make war on Germany, had further prepared for war, and went to war out of fundamentally selfish motives.*

In the early days of the conflict, George Bernard Shaw pronounced the excuse of declaring war because of the invasion of Belgium a sham. No less an authority than the *London Times* now discards the pretense asserted by Mr. Asquith, and, in addition, *Sir Henry Lucy has boasted of the fact that the English fleet before the war mobilized (with the purpose of later "bottling up the German fleet") on the pretext of an expected visit from the King.*

Perhaps the most striking statement regarding England's actual purposes and intentions is contained in an editorial, "Why We Are At War," published in the *London Times*, weekly issue, of March 12. Because of its position as the most conservative as well as official organ of Great Britain, The *Times* editorial is exceptionally significant. It begins thus:

"There are still, it seems, some Englishmen and Englishwomen who greatly err as to the reasons that have forced England to draw the sword. They know that it was Germany's flagrant violation of Bel-

gian neutrality which filled the cup of her indignation and made her people insist upon war. They do not reflect that our honor and our interest must have compelled us to join France and Russia, even if Germany had scrupulously respected the rights of her small neighbors, and had sought to hack her way into France through the Eastern fortresses. The German Chancellor has insisted more than once upon this truth. He has fancied, apparently, that he was making an argumentative point against us by establishing it. That, like so much more, only shows his complete misunderstanding of our attitude and of our character. The invasion of Belgium, and still more the abominable system of crime which followed it, have indeed very deeply moved us. Like Germany, we had given our word to uphold Belgian neutrality. Unlike Germany, we felt bound in honor to keep the word we had given. But we know very well that, in keeping it, self-interest has gone hand-in-hand with honor, with justice, and with pity. Why did we guarantee the neutrality of Belgium? For an imperious reason of self-interest, for the reason which has always made us resist the establishment of any Great Power over against our East Coast, for the reason which made us defend the Netherlands against Spain and against the France of the Bourbons and of Napoleon. We keep our word when we have given it, but we do not give it without solid, practical reasons, and we do not set up to be international Don Quixotes, ready at all times to redress wrongs which do us no hurt.

"Herr von Bethmann Hollweg is quite right. Even had Germany not invaded Belgium, honor and interest would have united us with France. We had refused, it is true, to give her or Russia any binding pledge up to the last moment. We had, however, for many years past led both to understand that, if they were unjustly attacked, they might rely upon our aid. This understanding had been the pivot of the European policy followed by the three Powers. It had been, as Germany herself acknowledged, a powerful factor in the preservation of European peace. England had drawn advantages from it as well as her partners. She would have stained her honor for ever if, after she had acted with them in fair weather, and had countenanced the confident belief which they both held that she would support them in a just quarrel, she had slunk away from them in the hour of danger."

The claim that England entered the war out of purely humanitarian reasons, on solely moral grounds, in order "to fulfill her obligation" and defend the Belgians, is flatly contradicted by the *Times* editorial, which continues:

"We joined the Triple Entente because we realized, however late in the day, that the time of 'splendid isolation' was no more. We reverted to our historical policy of the balance of power, and we reverted to it for the reasons for which our forefathers adopted it. They were not, either for them or for us, reasons of sentiment. They were self-regarding, and even selfish, reasons. Chief amongst them, certainly, was a desire to preserve the peace of Europe, but it was the chief only because to preserve that peace was the one certain way to preserve our own. In the event of war we saw, as our fathers had seen, England's first line of attack and of defence in her Continental Alliances. When we subsidized every State in Germany, and practically all Europe, in the Great War, we did not lavish our gold from love of German or of Austrian liberty, or out of sheer altruism. No; we invested it for our own safety and our own advantage, and, on the whole, our commitments were rewarded by an adequate return.

"In this war, as we have again and again insisted in *The Times*, England is fighting for exactly the same kind of reasons for which she fought Philip II., Louis XIV., and Napoleon. She is fighting the battle of the oppressed, it is true, in Belgium and in Serbia, and she rejoices that she is standing with them against their tyrants. She is

helping her great Allies to fight in defence of their soil and of their homes against the aggressor, and she is proud to pour out her blood and her treasure in so sacred a cause. But she is not fighting primarily for Belgium or for Serbia, for France or for Russia. They fill a great place in her mind and in her heart. But they come second. The first place belongs, and rightly belongs, to herself. It is for her and for her Empire that her sons have been struggling and dying in the trenches and on the fields of Picardy and Artois, that her Fleet holds its ceaseless vigil in the North Sea, and that its guns have been heard from the Pacific to the Dardanelles. Our soldiers and our sailors are defending their homes and the homes of their countrymen on French soil or in Turkish waters, just as truly as though they were facing German troops in Norfolk or German ships off Harwich."

In view of such recent admissions it is interesting to recall certain statements of England's diplomatists, as well as to compare these statements with official correspondence.

On August 6, 1914, Mr. Asquith said in the House of Commons:

"We are fighting to fulfill a solemn international obligation . . . to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed."

Four days prior to this assertion by Mr. Asquith, and before the invasion of Belgium by the German army, Sir Edward Grey had written to the French Ambassador:

"I am authorized to give an assurance that if the German Fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coast or shipping, the British Fleet will give all the protection in its power."

This is plainly an assurance that England would go to war if the German fleet should begin operations against France even if the German army should refrain from crossing Belgium.

Mr. Asquith in the House of Commons, on August 6, 1914, announced Germany's purposes as follows:

"What was the purpose of Germany? That we should have given a free license to Germany to annex the whole of the extra European dominions and possession of France."

Yet on August 1, Sir Edward Grey had sent the following dispatch to Sir E. Goschen:

"The German Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her Colonies might be guaranteed."

On August 3, Sir Edward Grey declared in the House of Commons that England had no secret arrangement with any Power:

"I assured the House—and the Prime Minister has assured the House more than once—that if any crisis such as this arose, we should come before the House of Commons and be able to say to the House, that it was free to decide what the British attitude should be, that we should have no secret engagement which we should spring upon

the House, and tell the House that because we had entered into that engagement there was an obligation of honor upon the country."

Yet on July 30 Sir Edward Grey had sent the following dispatch to the British Ambassador at Paris:

"The French Ambassador in London reminded me to-day of the letter I had written to him two years ago, in which we agreed that if the Peace of Europe was seriously threatened, we would discuss what we were prepared to do."

The letter referred to — that sent to the French Ambassador on November 22, 1912 — runs thus:

"My dear Ambassador: From time to time, in recent years, the French and British Naval and Military experts have consulted together . . . I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect something that threatened the general Peace, it should immediately discuss with the other what measures they would be prepared to take in common."

On August 2, 1914, Sir Edward Grey sent the following explanatory dispatch to the British Ambassador at Paris:

"It was essential to the French Government, whose Fleet had long been concentrated in the Mediterranean, to know how to make their dispositions with their North coast entirely undefended. We therefore thought it necessary to give them this assurance. It did not bind us to go to war with Germany unless the German Fleet comes through the North Sea or into the English Channel. It did give a security to France that would enable her to settle the disposition of her own Mediterranean Fleet."

Despite the fact that the French and British naval experts had consulted together regarding "measures they would be prepared to take in common," and despite the "assurance" that would enable France "to settle the disposition of her own Mediterranean fleet," Mr. Asquith declared in the House of Commons on April 6:

"England had been kept free. We were not tied by obligations to any power."

By these official utterances one may judge to what degree equivocation entered into the British policy.

Mr. Asquith's Government declared on August 6, 1914, to the House of Commons that the only cause of the war was the violation of Belgium neutrality. But on August 2, he had already ordered the British Fleet to fire upon German warships entering the North Sea in the absence of the French Fleet which "had long been concentrated in the Mediterranean" *by previous and secret arrangement with England!*

The German Ambassador had offered to guarantee the complete integrity of the French dominions, *both in Europe and the Colonies*, if the Asquith Government would promise neutrality in return. The Asquith Government refused that neutrality, and then informed the House of

Commons that Germany had insisted upon a free license to annex the Colonial dominions of France!

Further, the Asquith Government assured the House of Commons that "no ties or arrangements with Foreign Governments" had fettered the freedom of England's action; and yet it is proved by the dispatches of the British Foreign Office itself, that "from time to time in recent years the French and British Naval and Military experts have consulted together"—secretly—with a view to common action against Germany; and that in case of an expected disturbance of the peace of Europe, England and France should immediately discuss together "what measures they would be prepared to take in common."

Finally: the whole of the French Fleet "had long been concentrated in the Mediterranean"—for action against Germany. *This concentration had been arranged with the knowledge and approval of the British Government* which recognized that "it was essential to the French Government to know how to make their dispositions with their North Coast entirely undefended." Sir Edward Grey added that the British Government had therefore "thought it necessary" to give them the assurance that the British Fleet would sink any German warships which might menace the French coast or shipping; and that this belligerent participation of the British Fleet "did give a security to France that would enable her to settle the disposition of her own Mediterranean Fleet."

In other words, the secret arrangement between France and England, "*long before*" the actual crisis, by concentrating the French Fleet in the Mediterranean, imposed on the British Navy the obligation to protect northern France against Germany in order to allow the French Fleet in the Mediterranean to "settle its disposition"—against the Mediterranean forces of Germany and its Allies.

It is interesting also to compare a statement made by Sir John Simon and another made more recently by Sir Henry Lucy. Sir John Simon, the British attorney general, ignoring the consultations of the French and English general staffs during the "recent years preceding the war," spoke thus of England's keeping her plighted word to Belgium:

"Why was it that the position we had taken up was accepted with a stern and solemn determination by every man and woman in this country? The answer was a single word—Belgium. England's word to Belgium was England's bond. What had been done had shocked the conscience of the world. It meant that international obligations were to be regarded as waste paper. Might is right!"

Sir Henry Lucy, in a dispatch cabled from London and published in the New York *Evening Sun*, tells of the suspiciously opportune mobilization of the British fleet last August:

"Writing to me during the first week of the war, Lord Fisher spoke enthusiastically of Winston Churchill's work at the Admiralty. "I am," he wrote, "in close touch with Winston. He has been

splendid for three things—first, the appointment to the command of the fleet of Jellicoe, a comparatively young admiral; second, mobilizing before war was declared; third, buying the two Turkish dreadnoughts approaching completion in a British dockyard.’

“The appointment of Admiral Jellicoe has been justified by the action of the navy during the past seven months.

“Mobilization of the fleet before the war upon the innocent pretext of an expected visit from the King was a clever strategy that found the grand fleet opportunely in the North Sea when, a few days later, war was declared, with the result of bottling up the German fleet in the helpless condition in which it remains to this day.

“The consequence of the prompt assertion of right to commandeer the two first-class battleships, delivery of which Turkey was eagerly expecting, appears on reflection upon the mischief they might have done, since Turkey joined hands with Germany and Austria, and more especially in the present situation at the Dardanelles.”

Long before British statesmen let certain facts slip, long before the *London Times* frankly declared England’s motives, George Bernard Shaw dealt with the question of Belgian neutrality.

“What have we done for Belgium?” wrote Mr. Shaw. “Have we saved her soil from invasion? Were we at her side with half a million men when the avalanche fell on her? Or were we safe in our own country praising her heroism in paragraphs which all contrived to convey an idea that the Belgian soldier is about four feet high, but immensely plucky for his size? Alas, when the Belgian soldier cried: ‘Where are the English?’ the reply was ‘a mass of concrete as large as a big room,’ blown into the air by a German siege gun, falling back and crushing him into the earth we had not succeeded in saving from the worst horrors of war. We have not protected Belgium: Belgium has protected us at the cost of being conquered by Germany.”

Citing England’s bombardment of neutral Copenhagen during the great war of 1807, Mr. Shaw, in an article published in the *New York American*, declared England at that time offered the identically same justification made by Germany for her invasion of Belgium—“necessity, self-preservation as the first law of nature.”

“I said from the first that if we had been in Germany’s peril we should have gone through Belgium as she did and justified ourselves by the same arguments,” said Mr. Shaw. “And if I have any of the weight abroad with which you credit me it is because I have steadfastly resisted temptation to impose on foreigners with pharasaical nonsense and have faced the stern fact that we, like the Germans, have committed ourselves for good or for evil to win through by blood and iron and not by the exhibition of good conduct medals awarded by ourselves.”

In the *London Nation* of February 20, Mr. Shaw writes as follows:

“Neutrality is utter humbug. That is my position. There is no such thing as a breach of neutrality, because there is no such thing as neutrality.

“The importance of bringing this simple natural fact home at present arises from three considerations:

"First.—The danger of obscuring the real issues of the war by the false issue of the neutrality of Belgium.

"Second.—The danger that, instead of real terms of peace, fictitious terms in the form of fresh guarantees of neutrality may be accepted as valid.

"Third.—The general objection to throwing stones when you live in a glass house and are allied to eastern powers whose whole history is a huge cucumber frame.

"Those who insist that neutrality is real and is sacred are committed by the facts to the following propositions:

"First.—Germany has not violated Belgian neutrality. She has made war on Belgium, which her guarantee of Belgium's neutrality in no way abrogated her right to do, and her guarantee of Belgium's neutrality still stands in spite of the war and actually entitles her to treat a violation of it by another power as a *casus belli*.

"Second.—France and England have violated the neutrality of Belgium by invading her and fighting on her soil, though they are not at war with her.

"Third.—Germany offered to keep the peace with Belgium on a condition—that of a right of way—which Britain was the first to demand and to enforce by war in China.

"Fourth.—Britain and France refused to respect Belgian neutrality except on a condition which they knew would not be fulfilled and which in any case Belgium could not control—namely, that Germany would keep the peace with Belgium.

"Fifth.—Germany offered peace in Belgium.

"Sixth.—Britain ordered war peremptorily.

"I defy any international jurist to put a creditable complexion on these propositions except by showing that they are a *reductio ad absurdum* of the theory of neutrality and admitting that Belgium might as well have been a free country as a neutralized one for all the use the guarantee proved.

"And it is because I was not duped by that theory that I have set myself from the first to discredit the Belgian pretext for war and to induce our ministers and newspapers to drop it. I did so even before the document found in Brussels by the Germans left the foreign office so completely bowled out on the Belgian point by the German Chancellor that it had not a word to say.

"Why did Germany make war on Belgium? Because she was afraid to delay her rush on Paris by attacking France through Lorraine and Alsace.

"Why did she attack France? Because she was terrified by the Russian mobilization and was afraid that France would strike her from behind when she was attacked by Russia.

"Why did we attack Germany? Because we were afraid of her growing naval strength and believed that she would be irresistible if she conquered Russia and France and thus left us without effective allies. Frightened animals are dangerous, and man is no exception."

Mr. Shaw, in language less veiled, less felicitous to British sensibilities perhaps, declared exactly what has been admitted by the *London Times*. England did not go to war because Belgian territory had been invaded. England attacked Germany because of "self-regarding, and even selfish reasons," as the *Times* puts it. "Because," says Mr. Shaw less euphoniously, "we were afraid."

How the War Came

By "THE LABOR LEADER"

Some people think that it is not only unnecessary but wrong to discuss impartially how the war came. We do not agree because we are convinced that unless people have some accurate information on the point they will not understand what reforms the peace should bring with it if this is to be the last of the wars. At the present moment every apologist for the war finds that he gets the cheering assent of his audience if he talks about German "Kultur," German militarism and the German Kaiser as its sole causes; books and pamphlets are published purporting to give a full and accurate account of the diplomatic events which preceded the war, but which are only biased pieces of carefully selected information, or do not go nearly far enough back. *The country is being misled.* If the hatred thus engendered and the ignorance thus spread were to end with the war and bear no evil fruits later, it would not matter so much, because obviously the war must be finished now, and, whatever may be the rights and the wrongs of its origin, a victory for German arms and the worst elements in German society which the war has put into authority, would bring political results to Europe which no one who loves peace and liberty could welcome (?). But when we come to ask ourselves: What have we to do in order to see that there is no repetition of this crime? Obviously we must ask the preliminary questions: Who or what is responsible? Why has the crime been committed? And we must give answers like honest men if the answers are to be of any value.

In this pamphlet we shall confine ourselves to reciting the course of events which led up to the war, and the authorities relied upon will be the various national official publications.¹

I

In 1879 Bismarck formed an alliance with Austria. The Russo-Turkish War had ended and the Berlin Congress had been held. Rus-

¹ These publications are not of equal value. Our own White Paper is the best, and the most recently published French Yellow Book is the most unreliable, its dispatches being mainly expressions of biased opinion, and lacking the fulness of detail which they ought to supply. For instance, it is enlightening to compare the report which came to London (White Paper 6) with that which went to Paris (French Book 31) of the conversation which the British and French Ambassadors had with the Russian Foreign Minister on the 24th July.

sia was displeased that she had got so little from the war and blamed Germany, and the racial controversy between Slav and Teuton was intensified. The Tsar in a letter to the German Emperor conveyed a thinly veiled threat of war against Germany if Germany did not become more servile in supporting Russia's policy in the Near East.² Bismarck replied by making a treaty with Austria which the Emperor at once communicated to the Tsar, so friendly were they and so pro-Russian was the personal policy of the Prussian reigning house. In 1882 Italy, angry with France for outflanking her in Tunis, and desiring to protect herself, came in and the Triple Alliance was formed. Made at first for five years, it was renewed in 1887, 1891, and again in 1902, when it was agreed to for twelve years.

The essential facts about the Triple Alliance are: the Alliance was defensive; its origin was in the Pan-Slav attack upon Teutons in the Balkans; later it became a protection against the aggressive restiveness of France; however, Germany did not mean to quarrel with Russia, with which it had a secret treaty; England encouraged Italy's remaining in because that was convenient for us, for we then regarded France as our enemy, and when in 1887 the *English Conservative papers agreed that Germany might reasonably go through Belgium to attack France*,³ and about the same time secretly guaranteed Italy against an attack from the French fleet⁴ (how quickly the wheel of Fortune turns things upside down!) it was because we were very anxious that nothing should happen to the Triple Alliance. We regarded it as a protection to ourselves and a guarantee of European peace; and again, when the renewal in 1891 came, our Government strove to keep Italy in it and succeeded.⁵

Then came the balancing Franco-Russian treaty. Our friendship with Germany was the chief reason for France and Russia forming an alliance. In 1890 we made the agreement with Germany which readjusted colonies in Africa and ceded Heligoland. That friendship was taken by France as hostile to herself, and when in the same year Germany refused to renew the alliance of the three Emperors on account of the intrigues of Russia in the Balkans against Austria, Russia made approaches to France in 1891 and the treaty was concluded. *The enormous expansions in Germany of both industry and population since 1871 compelled her to shape her foreign policy with an eye upon the world and not on Europe alone. She was subject to the same kind of internal pressure which in earlier times led to those great eruptions of migration which have given us our present national and racial distributions of population. In 1898 she began to build a*

² "Cambridge Modern History," vol. xii, p. 143.

³ *Standard, Spectator*, etc., of the first week of February, 1887.

⁴ *Fortnightly Review*, September, 1902, p. 362; *Westminster Gazette*, May, 30, 1902.

⁵ *Fortnightly Review*, September, 1902, p. 365.

*fleet to protect her coasts and her commerce, and to add a sea power to the influence of the Triple Alliance, and as this went on, her relations with Great Britain cooled. Friction arose in Asia Minor. Turkey was played off against Russia. Whilst the German people sought a friendly understanding with Great Britain, the German diplomatic and military sections came to regard British interests and policy as hostile, and the German economic school of history assumed that British industrial interests would bring the two countries into collision in the end. This was the time when diplomacy had its opportunity. A blunder or an impatient move would make war inevitable. The German foreign policy became Pan-German; our own Foreign Office came under the control of anti-German and pro-Russian influences. Both ceased to trust each other. We allied ourselves with the Franco-Russian camp, and war became a question of time. This drift is admirably shown in the chapter on Germany contributed by Professor Oncken to the "Cambridge Modern History."*⁶

Prince Bülow had since 1897 held the office of Foreign Secretary (*Staatssekretariat des Auswärtigen*) under the aged Chancellor, Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe; on October 17, 1900, he succeeded to the Chancellorship and supreme responsibility for the entire policy of the empire, taking over the helm with a steady, expert hand. At every turn he found himself confronted with the necessity of choosing between England and the Dual Alliance, just as, in the seventies, Bismarck had been obliged to make choice between Russia and Austria. It seems that, in 1901, he deliberately rejected the advances of British statesmen in order that Germany might not become "the sword of England upon the Continent" and have to bear the brunt of any Russo-French onslaught. The determination to pursue an independent course in the end created ill-feeling across the Channel. Some mistakes there were; during the Boer War the sympathies of the Germans as of other nations lay with the weaker side; but at this crisis the Emperor staked his whole influence, nay, some measure of his popularity, against the popular feeling, tempered the bitterness aroused, and withstood every temptation from any other quarter. In the long run, however, apprehensions as to the commercial competition and naval preparations of Germany gained the day in England; indeed, impelled by Chauvinistic sentiment on both sides, the English nation began to accustom itself to the idea of a German peril, and finally to join the ranks of those opposed to Germany. After the Anglo-French *entente* of 1904 and the Algeiras Conference, a change in the old alliances began which introduced a new era in international politics; for the moment it looked as if Germany was to be exposed to the danger of isolation and to a policy of hemming in ("*Einkreisungspolitik*") on the part of her enemies, led, as was thought by King Edward VII.

In 1904 we came to an agreement with France which involved us in the Franco-Russian alliance without our being formally parties to it; *the Algeiras Conference and the Morocco bargaining followed, when France and ourselves deliberately threw down the gauntlet to Germany;*⁷ in 1907 we became parties to the Anglo-Russian agreement

⁶ Vol. xii., pp. 134-173.

⁷ The story of how this was done in defiance of treaties and by outraging public law has been told by Mr. E. D. Morel in "Morocco in Diplomacy," a book carefully compiled from official documents and declarations. (See "Is Britain Blameless?" farther on.)

regarding Persia—an agreement which we never enforced, in spite of Russia's disgraceful disregard of it, owing to our fear lest we should offend Russia and weaken the Triple *Entente*.

Thus Europe became divided into two hostile camps. France and Russia on the one side, and Germany on the other, recognized that war was likely and proceeded to prepare for it. We appear to have been less careful, except as regards our Navy, though mainly owing to the revelations of the South African War, the War Office, under Lord Haldane, did set its house in order and revolutionized the training and the organization of the Army. It is proof of no virtue, but rather of incompetence on the part of our Ministers when they tell us that they had no idea that war was coming until it was actually upon them. They are the only Ministers of any State in either the Triple Alliance or the Triple *Entente* who were so blind. From 1904 onward European policy hatched war as a hen hatches her chickens.

If proof is required of a truth so obvious that proof is superfluous, we have it in the fact that at the very earliest moment after the *Entente* was made, France, as honest broker, pointed out to us that *it was advisable to discuss plans of military co-operation in anticipation of a European war (which could only be with Germany)*. Sir Edward Grey consented, and without reporting the fact to the Cabinet allowed the conversations and agreements to mature through some years, saying nothing about them (except to the then Prime Minister, Secretary for War, and Chancellor of the Exchequer) until the Morocco affair had all but landed us in war.⁸

The diplomacy which divided Europe into two camps enormously strengthened the hands of the military section in Germany and made simple the working out of its designs; it increased the confidence of the same sections in Russia and assured it that when it chose to fight for its Pan-Slav programme both France and Great Britain would be behind it; it weakened our influence both in Asia and Europe, since the maintenance of the Triple *Entente* soon became of paramount importance to us *because of the German menace which it had made inevitable*, and also because our obligations to France compelled us to acquiesce in Russian policy; it increased armaments and gave every country a justification for imposing heavier military burdens on its people. In Great Britain its evil effects were intensified and its issue in war made easier by the Tariff Reform campaign, during which commercial rivalries were turned into national enmity. This opens up another group of causes of the war—the economic—but in this pamphlet we are tracing the downward paths which the diplomatists and politicians pursued.

Something more must be said about the influence of this policy

⁸Speech in the House of Commons, 3rd August, 1914. Hansard, lix., p. 1812.

of Alliance and Entente in Germany. There, the drift toward war stimulated in an inordinate degree the military caste. Russia, France and ourselves prepared for the conflict mainly by armaments and scares and prejudices on old-fashioned and traditional lines. But in Germany the preparation was more thorough and extensive. A brutal mechanical thoroughness is a Prussian characteristic. Russia is lethargic and corrupt, France is careless of detail and accepts fussiness for effective action, our authorities never understood the full danger of the game which they were playing and which was being played for them. Germany not only prepared but extended the activities of militarism. Every soldier knows that the game of war is made successful by knowledge of your enemy's doings, by demoralizing him and by killing him in multitudes. Big guns and carefully worked-out plans of campaigns were therefore supplemented by elaborate intelligence departments. Just as in civil organization the Germans surpassed their neighbors, so they beat them in military preparations. *To-day this is being used as a proof that Germany meant war more than Russia or France. But that is not the just conclusion from the facts. The militarism of all countries is cruel, immoral, unscrupulous; German militarism is able as well. That is the only difference.* The Zabern affair is only an extreme and absolute expression of the military mind of every country in the world. Every nation has its gang of spies who are mostly blackguards. The Russian spy dances on the boards of the music-hall and lives in grandeur in the West Ends of European capitals. Germany made no innovations in these respects, except that she did her work better and more thoroughly than other nations. The whole system is diabolically criminal, offensively disgusting. But it is militarism; it is a system. Germany has stripped it of sentiment, of humanity, of reticence, and has enthroned it in its appropriate savagery and scientific efficiency to kill and paralyze. German thoroughness carried to a logical and irresistible conclusion the crimes and the follies practiced by every other military power in Europe. They are all involved in the crime. No one Power can take up a high moral attitude against any other Power. They can boast of nothing except a less degree of blackness.

II

It happened that of the two camps into which the agreement of 1904 divided Europe, one was controlled by the Pan-Slav spirit and the other by the Pan-German spirit. This is not to say that Russia is Pan-Slav or that Germany is Pan-German; but it is to say that the differentiated military classes of the two countries and their supporters on the platform and in the Press can be described in this way. Other distinctions have also been drawn between them. For instance, it is said that the *Entente* stands for liberty and the Alliance

for military domination; the first for the sacredness of treaties and the second for tearing up treaties according to convenience. Whoever has followed the events of the past ten years knows how history has to be twisted and pruned of awkward facts (for instance, Morocco and Persian treaties and Russian conceptions of the civil liberties of her people or the national liberties of Finland) before the latter propositions can be supported. The former is the characteristic and decisive feature of the camps which were dominated by Russia and Germany respectively. The bugles blew in them to settle the racial quarrels between the Slav and the Teuton. *After* they had blown other issues arose, but these issues—*Belgium in particular and national liberty and public law in general*—had nothing whatever to do with the making of the war—though, we hope, the war is to have something to do with the settling of them.

These quarrels between Slav and Teuton came to a head in the Balkan States. In 1912 Russia managed to induce these States to form a Balkan League, mainly perhaps against Turkey (and for that purpose it was good), *but, so far as Russia was concerned, definitely against Austria*. Up to a certain point Russia and Austria had agreed to a divided influence in the Balkans, but Russia subsequently, obedient to the Pan-Slav spirit, began to elbow Austria out. Austria had unjustly annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina as a move in this new policy and as a precaution against Russian intrigue. At the time Russia was not in a position to reply, but set about building up a machine through which she might avenge herself. *Of all these States the most useful to Russia was Servia. Both in spirit and position it was the best for picking a quarrel with Austria, and so at the end of the wars Servia was aggrandized by Russia's favor and began the peace determined that another and a greater conflict should begin*. "I remember well," writes Miss Durham,¹⁰ "at the close of the Balkan War in May, 1913, a yelling pack of Montenegrins at the parcel post office bawling, 'We, the Serb people, have beaten the Turk. We are a Power. We shall set Europe on fire.' They claimed that they had all got Russia supporting them, and stated repeatedly that they would begin in Bosnia." This was repeated to Miss Durham by army officers, diplomats and others who knew what was going on. The Austrian Consul was maltreated at Prizren so grossly that the secretary to General Vukotitch stated: "The foulest insults were levelled at him and the flag. . . . Austria dares not tell or she would be laughed at by all Europe and forced to declare war." When that did not produce the desired quarrel, the Orthodox Catholics, of whom Austria is the guardian, were told that they would either have to abjure their faith or suffer death. The threats were carried out. Austria intervened, and

⁹ For a complete statement see "The Origins of the Great War," by H. N. Brailsford, published by the Union of Democratic Control, 1d.

¹⁰ *War and Peace* for November, 1914.

sounded friendly States regarding an ultimatum to Serbia. *This is the "revelation" made in the Italian Chamber on the 7th December which has been palmed off on a public that does not follow foreign affairs, as something terribly sinister and as a complete proof that Austria had meant war for some years.* Inquiry was forced upon the culprit State, the facts were proven and apologies had to be given. The powder again did not go off. *The next time more care was taken. The heir to the Austrian throne was assassinated at Sarajevo owing to a plot in which Servian officers were implicated and by bombs prepared in the Servian Government arsenal.* The Austrian ultimatum to Serbia was unjustifiable in its rigor and in the time it gave for an apology, but the whole circumstances have to be taken into account. We should like to know how a British Government would have acted to a neighboring State that was carrying on openly an aggressive anti-British propaganda, that had grossly insulted her, then defied her rights, and finally assassinated the Prince of Wales! That did fire the powder. The train spluttered and fizzled for some time, and then the fire rushed on to the magazine and blew it up.

Let us now trace the course of the negotiations which immediately preceded the outbreak of the war. The murder of the Archduke took place at Sarajevo on the 28th June, and Austria presented her Note to Serbia on the 23rd July. On that same day Sir Edward Grey expressed a hope that Austria and Russia would discuss any differences that might arise "directly with each other." The Austrian Ambassador replied that Russia "had not been very favorable recently."¹¹

We shall now trace the succeeding events day by day.¹²

24th July. The Russian Ambassador at Vienna says that Russia will not allow Austria to humiliate Serbia;¹³ Germany takes the view that considering all the circumstances Austria ought to be allowed to settle her quarrel with Serbia and put an end to the Servian plots and provocations;¹⁴ Serbia puts herself under the protection of Russia by a telegram sent to the Tsar by the Crown Prince,¹⁵ and also appeals to Britain to get Austria to modify the Note; the Russian Foreign Minister has an interview with the representative of the British and the French Governments in St. Petersburg,¹⁶ and he with the French representative urges the British representative to press his Government

¹¹ White Paper 3.

¹² Our readers who desire a fuller statement will find it in "The Diplomatic History of the War," by M. P. Price, 7s. To this book we are, as every one else who tries to unravel the tangle of events reported in the various official publications must be, deeply indebted.

The paragraphs in brackets express conclusions drawn from the facts to which reference is given, and are intended to make the significance of events clear.

¹³ White Paper 7.

¹⁵ Russian Orange Book 6.

¹⁴ White Paper 9.

¹⁶ White Paper 6.

to fulfil the obligations of the Triple *Entente* and to "proclaim their solidarity with France and Russia." [*This is of the greatest importance as showing that Russia had no anxiety about negotiations, but was looking to war*, and it must be noted that at the interview the Russian Foreign Minister said that "Russian mobilization would at any rate have to be carried out," and the French Ambassador gave ours to understand that "France would fulfil all the obligations entailed by her alliance with Russia if necessity arose."] The German official publication¹⁷ states that the Russian Foreign Minister told the German Ambassador that Russia would not allow the dispute to be settled between Austria and Servia alone. [Whilst Sir Edward Grey was trying to localize the dispute, Russia had made up her mind that it is not to be localized. The German Ambassador in Paris said that the quarrel must be localized.¹⁸ His words were: "The German Government desires urgently the localization of the dispute because every interference of another Power would, owing to the natural play of alliances, be followed by incalculable consequences."¹⁹

Thus the game opened, and *no one who studies all the papers can doubt for a moment but that Russia from the first day moved for war.*]

25th July. Austria declines to recognize Russia's right to interfere in the Servian quarrel; Servia replies to the Austrian Note in terms which every one knows; the German Foreign Secretary admits that the Austrian Note was bad, and agrees to Sir Edward Grey's suggestion as to the four Powers working in favor of moderation at Vienna and St. Petersburg, *should the relations between Austria and Russia become threatening*;²⁰ the Russian Foreign Secretary declines to allow Austria to settle with Servia alone, because he says Austria is striking at Russia through Servia, *he does not believe Germany wants war*, but he renews his appeal to us to let the world know that we stand in with the Triple *Entente* and to take "our stand firmly with France and Russia";²¹ in Paris the German Ambassador explains that his Note of the previous day was not a threat, as the Jingo elements in Paris had made it out to be; in London Sir Edward Grey tries to get an extension of time for Servia, and explains that the Austrian quarrel with Servia does not concern us except in so far as it may bring in Russia. [*The German attitude was that Europe should not interfere in the Balkan trouble, but that if Russia insisted on playing a part then Germany would support cooperation between the four Powers—England, France, Germany and Italy—to effect a settlement.* This was before Sir Edward Grey made his proposal. It undoubtedly was a great embarrassment that Sir Edward Grey would not make his position

¹⁷ Document 4.

²⁰ White Paper 18; also German Book 13.

¹⁸ Orange Book 8.

¹⁹ French Book 28.

²¹ White Paper 17.

clear. His uncertainty encouraged the military sections of Germany, without discouraging Russia who was playing a bold and subtle game, *being assured of the support of France and knowing the sympathies of our Foreign Office.*

It is of the first importance to note that this day Russian partial mobilization began, as is proved by the Tsar's telegram to the Kaiser on the 30th, in which it is stated that the "*military measures now coming into operation were decided upon five days ago.*"²² The evidence which Mr. Price has so patiently collected in his book makes it perfectly clear that *Russia began to mobilize before Austria. Austria did not mobilize till the 26th.*]

26th July. Germany informs the various countries that Austria in punishing Serbia would annex no territory and appeals to England and France to use restraining influences on St. Petersburg.²³ The Austrian Ambassador in St. Petersburg gives the same assurance to the Russian Foreign Minister, and the outlook brightens.²⁴ Russia continues her mobilization plans, however, and France and Germany are busy with precautionary preliminaries. Sir Edward Grey makes a proposal that the Ambassadors of France, Germany and Italy should meet in London together with him and discuss a settlement, and states "if the war were to break out no Power in Europe could take up a detached attitude."²⁵

27th July. In Vienna the Russian and Austrian diplomatists have a discussion²⁶ and Germany is accused of having intrigued with Austria.²⁷ Austria will not accept any settlement until she has punished Serbia and, with Servian provocation rankling in her mind, accuses her of bad faith, etc. Germany expresses her opinion that if Sir Edward Grey's proposal of yesterday is to be effective, Russia and Austria ought to ask for the Conference. Germany insists that the differences between Austria and Serbia should be settled by themselves. As regards the Austro-Russian dispute, that is a different matter.²⁸ Germany therefore influences Vienna directly and persuades her to approach Russia direct.²⁹ **The correspondents of the Times, Manchester Guardian and Daily Chronicle agree that Germany is working for peace.** But on this day Russia once more urges England to back her and bring out the *Entente* against the Alliance. At the same time the Russian Foreign Minister conditionally agrees with Sir Edward Grey's four-Power conference, "if direct

²² German Book 23a; also French Book 50.

²³ White Paper 33 and 34; German Book 10 and 10a; French Book 56.

²⁴ White Paper 56.

²⁵ French Book 50.

²⁶ White Paper 56.

²⁷ Orange Book 41.

²⁸ German Book 12.

²⁹ German Book 15.

explanations with the Vienna Cabinet were to prove impossible,³⁰ and the Tsar sends a telegram to the Crown Prince of Servia asking Servia to be reasonable, but assuring him that "under no circumstances" will Russia "remain indifferent to the fate of Servia."³¹ France continues to play her part subordinate to Russia, but accepts Sir Edward Grey's proposal, whilst the Russian Ambassador in Paris tells his Government to believe that because Germany is urging France to restrain Russia her only motive is to break up the Triple *Entente*! The English Admiralty orders the Fleet to remain concentrated and Sir Edward Grey shows irritation against Germany³² and gives the Russian Ambassador some encouragement by telling him of the orders given to the Fleet.³³ He also warns the Austrian Ambassador that Austria cannot punish Servia without involving Russia.³⁴ [Evidently Russia is now getting the upper hand. France is passively behind her, and Russia knows that. The French Book is one unbroken proof of this fact. England is being drawn in. Germany is miscalculating the forces and is taking the stilted line that whilst willing to decide a dispute between Austria and Russia by the four Powers she will not support a reference of the Austro-Servian dispute to them.]

28th July. Austria declares war on Servia, and Germany continues to work for the success of Conversations in Vienna and St. Petersburg,³⁵ although Austria seems to be opposed.³⁶ But Germany is disturbed by rumors of the Russian mobilization. *The Kaiser also telegraphs to the Tsar that he is bringing pressure to bear upon Austria. Foreign newspaper correspondents confirm this.* Sir Edward Grey approves of the direct communication between Vienna and St. Petersburg,³⁷ but asks that his own proposal should also be accepted.

29th July. Fighting opens between Austria and Servia and the military party in Germany begins to get the upper hand owing to the spread of the panic about Russia's mobilization. On this day the German Chancellor, returning in an excited state from a meeting of the War Council, makes clumsy and unacceptable proposals to the British Ambassador regarding British neutrality in the event of a war.³⁸ Russia again informs us through our Ambassador that Austria has declined to treat with her, and repeats her qualified acceptance of Sir Edward Grey's proposals with a new qualification—if *Servia would agree*. [It appears that Russia never liked this proposal, and only French pressure made her go so far as she did in giving it conditional acceptance. The French Book is strangely silent on this matter.]

³⁰ White Paper 53.

³² White Paper 46.

³⁴ White Paper 48.

³⁶ White Paper 74.

³¹ Orange Book 40.

³³ White Paper 47.

³⁵ White Paper 71 and German Book 14.

³⁷ White Paper 67 and 68.

³⁸ White Paper 85.

Meanwhile, Germany continues her pressure on Austria and is willing to guarantee the integrity of Servia,³⁹ but is told by Russia that she will not withhold mobilization, as war seems to be inevitable. "We cannot comply with the wish of Germany, it remains only to hasten our preparations and to reckon with the probable inevitability of the war."⁴⁰ The message sent to the Press this day by Reuter's St. Petersburg correspondent is as follows: "*Confident of England's support about which doubts have mostly disappeared, the Russian public is prepared to accept war.*" Sir Edward Grey tells the French Ambassador that the English Government has not made up its mind what it will do; at the same time he tells the German Ambassador that Russia cannot be expected to allow Austria to humiliate Servia.⁴¹ [This marks a change in British policy. It is now admitted that Russia is acting reasonably in taking a step which every one knew would plunge Europe in war and bring the Alliance and the *Entente* into conflict. Sir Edward Grey had traveled far since he declared on the 3rd August, 1908, that England would never go to war over a Balkan question. The *Entente* has had its influence. We were no longer free. Subsequent events are little more than a manœuvring for position.]

30th July. Austria suddenly becomes reasonable,⁴² owing to German pressure and is willing to resume conversations in St. Petersburg.⁴³ But Russia blocks the way. The Kaiser appeals to the Tsar to stop the menace of mobilization under the happier prospects,⁴⁴ and King George is also asked to intervene. The pacifists for the moment are in the ascendant. But Russia's action defeats them. On the morning of this day she agrees to stop all military preparations if Austria will promise not to violate Servian sovereignty,⁴⁵ and this is telegraphed to Berlin.⁴⁶ Without waiting for a reply, Russia orders what amounts to an "absolute and general"⁴⁷ mobilization in the evening. This last step is also taken partly against the advice of Sir Edward Grey.⁴⁸ On this day France moves with Russia and the French Ambassador reminds Sir Edward Grey of the military negotiations and the letter which the Cabinet gave him in 1912. It is important to note that M. Cambon makes it clear that if Germany demands France's neutrality in the event of a war with Russia France could not agree. Sir Edward Grey takes further steps. He replies to the German Chancellor's proposals for British neutrality made on the 29th, indignantly rejecting them; he urges Germany to help to keep the peace and offers to effect a new European combination (thus reversing his old policy); he prac-

³⁹ White Paper 97.

⁴⁰ Orange Book 58.

⁴¹ White Paper 88 and 89.

⁴² White Paper 112, and other scattered references.

⁴³ Sir Maurice Bunsen's special dispatch, Cd. 7596.

⁴⁴ German Book 23.

⁴⁵ White Paper 97.

⁴⁶ Orange Book 60.

⁴⁷ *Times* and *Daily Chronicle* correspondents.

⁴⁸ White Paper 103.

tically takes up the position that we shall protect the French Colonies.⁴⁹ [The policy of non-committal and drift was coming to an end. What Russia had been manœuvring for since the beginning—viz., that the *Entente* should come into the field and oppose the Alliance—was coming about.]

31st July. Russia and Austria are coming apparently to a settlement,⁵⁰ and conversations are in progress. *Austria gives assurances that she does not desire to infringe the sovereign rights of Servia and so accepts Russia's conditions of peace.*⁵¹ Germany continues to keep pressure on Vienna, but Berlin is agitated by the widened Russian mobilization which is being pushed ahead. The German Chancellor refuses to respect the neutrality of Belgium in the event of war.⁵² ["The long-laid military plans had to be worked in full if they had to be worked at all." That is the curse of stupid militarism. It never sees beyond its nose, and has no conception of the working of the finer mechanism of human nature.] The preliminaries to German mobilization are taken, and the Kaiser makes a final appeal to King George. [The criminal folly of the German military chiefs in refusing to recast their military plans (even though these plans had been no secret for many years and had received the sanction of Conservative opinion in England as far back as 1887) enabled the whole issues to be confused, and immediately played into the hands of the military and war sections of the *Entente*. Ultimately it brought destruction on an unoffending people and broke up the Peace Party in England.] Russia defends her mobilization to us through our Ambassador, but the explanations are worthless when tested by published facts. *The Tsar explains to the Kaiser that he will take no provocative action, although the action he is taking is as near a declaration of war as possible.* Germany regards it as such and presents an ultimatum. France agrees to respect Belgian neutrality, *military circumstances making that declaration a mere matter of course.* Sir Edward Grey again declines to ask Russia to stop her mobilization,⁵³ though he expresses an opinion that Austria's mobilization was not too great in view of the Servian army of 400,000 men [and therefore, by implication, that Russia was not justified in using Austria's action as a justification for her own]. If Germany would bring forward some proposal making it clear that Austria and herself were trying to preserve peace,⁵⁴ he informs the German Ambassador, he is willing to tell Russia and France that they should accept such proposal, *but although the conditions seem to have been fulfilled, nothing happens.* Once more an appeal is made (this time from France) to Sir Edward Grey to say definitely what he is going to do. His uncertainty is jeopardizing peace.⁵⁵ Belgium is

⁴⁹ White Paper 101.⁵² White Paper 122.⁵⁴ White Paper 111.⁵⁰ Cd. 7596.⁵¹ White Paper 137.⁵³ White Paper 110.⁵⁵ White Paper 119.

discussed with France, and Sir Edward Grey's statement is that the invasion of Belgium would *not* be a "decisive, but an important factor in determining England's attitude." Only "important"! ⁵⁶

1st August. Germany mobilizes, and those working for peace and all considerations of policy other than those of the brutal, mechanical, murderous, military kind are swept to one side. But before the pacifists go finally they make one more effort. The German Ambassador in London begs Sir Edward Grey to say on what conditions England will remain neutral,⁵⁷ and a misunderstood telephone message regarding French neutrality is seized upon in Berlin as an opportunity for localizing the war. [In the House of Commons on the 27th August, Sir Edward Grey explained, in answer to a question by Mr. Keir Hardie, that the German Ambassador's proposal referred to in the White Paper 123 was not official and was "without authority." That may have been so, *but the document bears no traces of it.* Its opening paragraphs are patently official, and the statement of the proposal is in no way differentiated from the other part of the document. If any injustice has been done to Sir Edward Grey he alone is to blame. At the time, the House of Commons was not in a frame of mind to listen to any criticism. But when Document 123 is rediscussed later on, more explanations will be required. As it stands, with Sir Edward Grey's House of Commons statement added to it, it is either a very imperfect record of the interview or is most misleading. If it records a purely personal appeal from the Ambassador it is rather strange that it was telegraphed to Berlin embedded in official matter of considerable importance. As a matter of fact, the German Ambassador had telegraphed to the Imperial Chancellor that he was to discuss neutrality with Sir Edward Grey, and this did give some official authority to the conversation.⁵⁸ Moreover, in Sir Edward Grey's statement we find use made of the fact that the German Ambassador begged him on the 3rd August not to make Belgian neutrality a condition of England's neutrality. The only comment that can be made on that is that it was a clever way of confusing the narrative. The incident of White Paper 123 took place two days before that. The appeal of the 3rd came naturally because the suggestion of the 1st had produced no result. **If the White Paper proves anything with absolute certainty it is that Sir Edward Grey never tried to save Belgium in the event of a war breaking out. He was helplessly tied up by the Entente. He could not honorably have remained at the**

⁵⁶ This must be read with the letter of the Opposition leaders urging war, sent to the Prime Minister two days later, *in which there is no mention of Belgium, but only of our obligations to France and Russia.*

⁵⁷ White Paper 123.

⁵⁸ Published amongst the supplementary official documents which appeared in the *Nord-Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, September 5.

Foreign Office if Great Britain had remained neutral. It is evident that Sir Edward Grey had now made up his mind that the Entente and its sequel, the naval arrangements with France, bound us to take part in the war—not for Belgium, not for liberty, not to suppress militarism, but because our honor had been committed to France. Besides, it was at this time being freely rumored in the House of Commons, and found its way into the Press, that if the Cabinet had decided upon neutrality Sir Edward Grey would have resigned, as he was of opinion that his whole policy had been inconsistent with neutrality.] While Russia's European war is in progress, Vienna and St. Petersburg are settling their differences and the original cause of the quarrel bids fair to be adjusted.⁵⁹ France mobilizes in the afternoon. In London the misunderstood telephone communication referred to above takes place.

2nd August. It is rumored in Berlin that Russian troops have crossed the frontier and the Kaiser, addressing a crowd, says Germany has been attacked; in St. Petersburg it is published abroad that Germany has attacked Russia. Sir Edward Grey for the first time has a majority of the Cabinet with him on the plea of Belgium and notice is given of resignations. [On Monday afternoon, the 3rd, some were withdrawn.] *The Cabinet agrees to back France*, putting in as a condition which was purely nominal in the circumstances that Parliament would support it.

3rd August. Germany declares war on France; Sir Edward Grey addresses the House of Commons.

4th August. Meeting of Reichstag is held, and later the Chancellor has his "scrap of paper" interview with the British Ambassador. Great Britain declares war on Germany.

III

The chapter we set out to write is finished and all that remains is to gather together into a brief conclusion what it means.

(1) The war arose from a policy to effect a balance of power in Europe through a Triple Alliance and a Triple *Entente*.

(2) It happened most unfortunately (though this ought to have been foreseen and guarded against) that the Alliance and the *Entente*

⁵⁹ White Paper 137; Cd. 7596. There is a conflict of evidence here between our own papers and Russian statements (cf. White Paper 139), but no jury would believe what the Russian Foreign Minister was then saying without corroborative evidence. Even the Russian Orange Book 73 casts doubts upon the word of her Foreign Secretary.

were respectively dominated by bitterly opposed racial influences, and these influences provided the circumstances from which the conflict arose.

(3) As a matter of fact, Great Britain was as much bound by the *Entente* as though she had made a definite written commitment—indeed, the unwritten agreement bound us more than a written one would have done, just as a specific obligation is less dangerous in business than a vague understanding. In any event, the *Entente* led to the Naval conversations which committed our honor.⁶⁰ None of this was told to the country, which was led to believe that it was quite free.

(4) Throughout the negotiations the Powers were compelled to act with their Allies. In the first stage of the negotiations Germany represented Austrian interests—France was a mere second to Russia, and we were hampered.

(5) Either Sir Edward Grey's proposal or the German one would have secured peace in Europe if the Austrian quarrel with Servia had not been extended by Russia. Indeed, this quarrel was in a fair way to settlement when the bigger one—purely the creation of the diplomatists and the result of the alliances—was bringing war upon Europe.

(6) None of the matters which fill such an important place in the minds of the people and their newspapers at present—Belgium, nationality, public law and right—appear in the negotiations until war has become inevitable. *Indeed, most of them come into play only after the war began. With the war, the floodgates were opened; all the questions leading up to the war were submerged and altogether new problems arose.*

(7) The military frame of mind was common in varying degrees to every country. *The Franco-Russian Alliance was meant to be aggressive; Russia and France both meant to use us in their quarrels; we had our Bernhardis; the German military class was strong, the ablest in Europe, and aggressive.*

(8) The military sections and the preachers of organized force were not strong enough in any country to make war had not the diplomatists played into their hands. The flood of stuff poured out about warlike historians and philosophers is but academic vanities and pomposities, mainly used by publishers for making profits. Within the memory of one who has lived only a little more than a generation, Russia and France have both been anathematized by us as being dangers to the peace of Europe; the wheel of time has now brought Germany into

⁶⁰ See the use made of this by Sir Edward Grey in his speech on the 3rd August, Hansard, lxx., pp. 1815-18.

that place; and on each of these occasions Russia, France and Germany have believed that Great Britain was an intolerable power which had to be taught a lesson.

(9) In every country there was a strong peace party, but in no country had that party time to make itself effective. In Russia it was weakest; in Great Britain it was strongest. So weak was it in Russia that it never counted; *in Germany it was active until the Russian mobilization; in France it did little but look on*, except that the Socialist parliamentarians, headed by Jaurès, held frequent conferences with the Prime Minister and urged him to influence Russia. It is known that the interview which Jaurès had with Viviani an hour or two before his assassination was on this very point. In England, the German invasion of Belgium broke up the pacifists. But the records of the negotiations show that every country except Russia strove for peace, and that but for the alliances and the treaty obligations war would never have broken out at all.

But war has broken out, and this statement of how it came has been made because unless we can restore some balance and accuracy to popular criticism, *some knowledge of reality to supplant absurdities about Germany and silence about Russia*, the peace will come and the triumph of the Allies will mean nothing either to the peace or the liberty of Europe.

Britain and the War: A Study in Diplomacy

By C. H. NORMAN

I

AUSTRIA, SERBIA, RUSSIA, AND GERMANY

The first step in the tragedy, which was so rapidly unfolded before the astounded peoples of Europe in July last, was taken by Austria in October, 1908, when it was announced that the Austrian Protectorate over Bosnia and Herzegovina had become a formal occupation. The cause of this action was the Young Turk Revolution in Turkey, as a result of which the Powers, who had divided among themselves certain portions of the Turkish Empire, feared that Turkey might be induced to challenge the proceedings under which partial dismemberment of her Empire had taken place.

The Servian Government, at that time just emerging from the discredit into which the horrible circumstances connected with the murder of King Milan and Queen Draga had enveloped it, protested against this conduct of the Austro-Hungarian Government, on the ground that the interests of Serbia in Bosnia were greater than those of Austria, and that Austria had been permitted in Bosnia by Europe only as a trustee; so that the annexation was a breach of trust.* Public opinion in Europe, generally speaking, pronounced itself decidedly against the excuses of Austria, as it was clear that the abrupt destruction of the *status quo* in the Balkans, at a time when Turkey was in an internal ferment, might gravely imperil the future peace of Europe.

On March 31st, 1909, Serbia made the following declaration to the Austrian Government: "*Servia declares that she is not affected in her rights by the situation established in Bosnia, and that she will therefore adapt herself to the decisions which the Powers are going to arrive at. . . . By following the counsels of the Powers, Servia binds herself to cease the attitude of protest and resistance which she has assumed since last October, relative to the annexation, and she binds herself further to change the direction of her present policy toward Austria-Hungary, and in the future to live with the latter in friendly and*

* This is a one-sided statement. Austria had spent millions on education, public improvements, etc., and given the provinces a better government than they had ever enjoyed, and annexation became necessary to protect them from being annexed by the Young Turks. They were placed under Austrian protectorate by the Congress of Berlin, 1878.—Ed.

neighborly relations."¹ The charge brought against the Servian Government by Austria has been that that solemn undertaking was not adhered to in any way. The German Chancellor, in a confidential note to the German Governments dated 28th July, put the Austro-German point of view in this way: "The agitation conducted by the Pan-Slavs"—that is, the Servian Party—"in Austria-Hungary has for its goal, with the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the scattering or weakening of the Triple Alliance with a complete isolation of the German Empire in consequence. Our own interest, therefore, calls us to the side of Austria."² On that date, Germany knew that the policy initiated by King Edward of isolating Germany was being completed; and that there was a combination of Russia, France, and Britain, possibly Japan, all actuated by a suspicious spirit toward the policy of Germany.

In 1911 came the European crisis over the Morocco Question, when Germany, faced by a combination of Russia, France, Britain, and Spain, sustained a disastrous diplomatic check. That fact undoubtedly much exasperated opinion in Germany, as it was a further confirmation of the fixed idea that there was a tacit understanding to undermine her influence at every point. That this was so was apparently felt by *Sir Edward Grey*, whose anti-German policy has been such a potent cause of the terrible catastrophe now being analyzed, for he telegraphed to the British Ambassador in Berlin on July 30th, 1914, in these remarkable terms: "If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavor will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately."³ *That repentance was too late; but those words cast a bright light upon the errors of the past.*

In 1912 the first Balkan War broke out, in which Turkey was severely handled by a combination of Bulgaria, Greece, Servia, and Montenegro. On May 26th, 1913, peace was concluded between Turkey and the allied combination. On June 30th, Bulgaria was attacked by Greece, Servia, and Roumania, and had to surrender much of what she had won. This internecine conflict led to much bitterness between the Balkan States. The Austrian Government exhibited some anxiety at the territorial accessions secured by Servia in these two wars, especially as the Pan-Serb agitation in Bosnia had become very active. A threatening tone was adopted by the Austrian Government and Press toward the Servian Government, an attitude which much irritated the Russian Government. What ensued is well summarized in the Annual Register for 1913: "In foreign politics the greatest achievement

¹ "Why we are at War," p. 144.

² "Why we are at War," p. 162.

³ "Great Britain and the European Crisis." Document 101, p. 77.

of Germany this year was the prevention of a European War, which would in all probability have broken out if the Emperor William had not plainly declared on the one hand to Austria-Hungary that he would not support her should she be involved in a war with Russia as the consequence of an attack by her upon Servia, and on the other to Russia that if she attacked Austria-Hungary, notwithstanding her abstinence from active intervention in the Balkans, he would fight by the side of his Austrian ally." That stand was effective, and the crisis of 1913 was safely passed.

On June 28th, 1914, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian Emperor, and his Consort, were murdered at the City of Sarejevo, the capital of Bosnia. The incidents connected with the crime were most startling. Three different attempts were made on the part of the assassins, at separate places, within a short period of time. *The murder was seemingly anticipated in several cities—notably London, Belgrade, St. Petersburg, and Rome.* In view of the extraordinary line now being taken by certain members of His Majesty's Government with regard to Austria, it is worth while to recall the references of the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister of Britain to that assassination. Sir E. Grey said, on the 29th June, in the House of Commons: "I was one of those who less than a year ago saw the pleasure that was given here by the visit to the King of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his Consort. I knew the goodwill which the Archduke personally expressed toward our country during his visit and the pleasure which he so obviously felt in that visit." Mr. Asquith, in moving an address of condolence to the Emperor of Austria, used this language, which was either unreal, or mocking, in view of the proceedings of the Government since: "We are once more confronted with one of those incredible crimes which almost make us despair of the progress of mankind. . . . The Emperor and his people have always been our friends, and in the name of the Commons, of the nation, of this United Kingdom, we respectfully tender to him, and to the great family of nations of which he is the venerable and venerated head, our heartfelt and most affectionate sympathy." Yet, *within six weeks of the utterance of these sentiments*, Britain had drifted into war with Austria-Hungary, against which country no one has pretended that Britain has any legitimate ground of complaint!

Faced with this terrible loss, the Austrian Emperor directed that a secret inquiry should be begun into the plot which had led to the murder. The conclusions arrived at at that inquiry have thus been set forth by the Austrian Government: "(1) The plan to murder the Archduke during his stay in Sarajevo was conceived in Belgrade by Gabrilo Princip, Nedeljko, Gabrinowic, and a certain Milan Ciganowic and Trifko Grabez, *with the aid of Major Voja Tankosic.* (2) The six bombs and four Browning pistols which were used by the criminals

were obtained by Milan Ciganowic and Major Tankosic, and presented to Princip Gabrinowic in Belgrade. (3) *The bombs are hand grenades, manufactured at the arsenal of the Servian Army in Kragujevac.* (4) To insure the success of the assassination, Milan Ciganowic instructed Princip Gabrinowic in the use of grenades and gave instructions in shooting with Browning pistols to Princip Grabez in a forest near the target practice field of Topshider (outside Belgrade). (5) In order to enable the crossing of the frontier of Bosnia by Princip Gabrinowic and Grabez, and the smuggling of their arms, a secret system of transportation was organized by Ciganowic. The entry of the criminals with their arms into Bosnia and Herzegovina was effected by the frontier captains of Shabatz and Loznica, with the aid of several other persons."⁴ It has been complained against the Austrian Government that the evidence on which these findings were founded was not published.⁵ That complaint is open to four observations: (1) The Austrian Government might not have desired to reveal the full ramifications of the conspiracy, until it was known who had inspired it, because the above findings were only directed against the agents of the conspiracy as distinguished from its authors. (2) It is not the practice in Austria-Hungary, and in that respect Austria is like many other Continental countries, to conduct preliminary inquiries into political crimes in public. (3) Austria was much aggrieved by the crime. The pride of the Hapsburgs is notorious; and this was an occasion when any comment on their actions would be regarded as an affront. (4) Servia maintained all the while a position of masterly inactivity.

The murder took place on the 28th June, but it was not until July 23rd that Austria presented a stiff ultimatum demanding certain reparation from Servia. The Austrian Ambassador in London offered some explanation of the strong terms of that ultimatum in these remarks, as recorded by Sir E. Grey: "Count Mensdorff said that if Servia, in the interval that had elapsed since the murder of the Archduke, had voluntarily instituted an inquiry on her own territory, all this might have been avoided."⁶ As a matter of fact, Servia had done nothing, conduct which led the Kaiser to telegraph with some justifiable asperity to the Tsar: "The spirit which made the Servians murder their own King and his Consort still dominates that country."⁷ It is fair to remember, too, that the real criminals in connection with the Archduke's assassination have not been brought to justice yet.

The Austrian ultimatum created some indignation in Russia; and it is at this point that the sinister designs of Russia begin to appear. Servia appealed to the Tsar for his protection, in the meantime pre-

⁴ "Why we are at War," pp. 148-149.

⁵ The Foreign Office has now disclosed that the evidence was received by Britain on the 7th August.

⁶ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," Document 3, p. 2.

⁷ "Why we are at War," p. 170.

senting a conciliatory reply to the Austrian Government. *It is probable that the reply would have been accepted by Austria, had not the Servian Government so often broken its pledges, given in 1909, to live "in neighborly and friendly relations" with Austria.*

The vital point of the Austrian ultimatum, namely, that Austrian officers should watch the inquiry to be held by Serbia so as to see that it was a genuine one, was rejected by Serbia as an interference with her integrity as a sovereign state. A deadlock was thus reached, as Austria was unwilling to forego this demand and submit her case to an international tribunal, where Serbia, whom she was accusing of carrying on a murderous propaganda, would have presented herself as an equal of Austria. The attitude of Austria was, undoubtedly, a harsh and unbending one in the beginning; but, *before condemning Austria too severely, Britons should ask themselves this question: Supposing the Prince of Wales had been murdered in Germany, and the inquiry showed a connection of German officials with the murderers, that knowing this the German Government did nothing, would the statesmen of Britain have submitted such a matter to the Hague Tribunal?* It may be that they ought to have done so in a democratic community; but does any reasonable man think that the Government would have taken such a course? The British Ambassador at Vienna thus diagnosed public feeling in Austria in his despatch on the rupture of diplomatic relations: "The demeanor of the people at Vienna showed plainly the popularity of the idea of war with Serbia, and there can be no doubt that the small body of Austrian and Hungarian statesmen by whom this momentous step was adopted rightly gauged the sense of the people. . . . *The country certainly believed that it had before it only the alternative of subduing Serbia or of submitting sooner or later to mutilation at her hands.*"⁸ On July 23rd, the British Ambassador at Rome reported: "Secretary-General took the view that the gravity of the situation lay in the conviction of the Austro-Hungarian Government that it was absolutely necessary for their prestige, after many disillusion in the Balkans, to score a definite success."⁹ The Austrian Government, under pressure from the Russian and German Governments, declared its intention of not seeking any territorial compensation at the expense of Serbia. Then, on 26th July, the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg wired to the German Chancellor: "The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador had an extended interview with Sazonoff this afternoon. Both parties had a satisfactory impression, as they told me afterward. *The assurance of the Ambassador that Austria-Hungary had no idea of conquest, but wished to obtain peace at last at her frontiers, greatly pacified the Secretary.*"¹⁰ On 28th July, Austria-Hun-

⁸ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," p. 115.

⁹ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," Document 38, p. 30.

¹⁰ "Why we are at War," p. 164.

gary declared war on Servia. The British Ambassador at Vienna comments: "The inevitable consequence ensued. Russia replied to a partial Austrian mobilization and declaration of war against Servia by a partial Russian mobilization against Austria."¹¹ Here must be inserted two telegrams which tell most heavily against the good faith of Russia. On July 26th, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs sent this extraordinary telegram to the Russian Ambassador at Rome: "Italy could play an all-important rôle in the preservation of peace if she could use her influence in Austria and bind herself to a neutral attitude in the conflict, since it cannot remain localized. It would be desirable for you to say that it is impossible for Russia not to give help to Servia."¹² What could that mean but that Russia had decided to kindle a general conflagration? Austria had pledged her honor not to take Servian territory. If she broke her word, then would have been the moment for Russia to call Austria to account. That Russia and Servia were playing a dubious game is confirmed by this frank admission of the Tsar, on the 30th July. "The military measures now taking form were decided upon *five days ago*, and for the *reason of defence* against the preparations of Austria."¹³ That is to say, *Russia had decided on mobilization on the 25th July—three days before Austria had declared war on Servia!* What reason of defence was there in this act? As the Kaiser telegraphed on the 31st July to the Tsar: "Nobody threatens the honor and power of Russia; which could well have waited for the result of my mediation."¹⁴ The Russian mobilization was grossly provocative, and was a primal cause of the catastrophe which has befallen Europe; because that mobilization terrified the German Government, which could not understand the motive of Russia in shielding Servia from the wrath of Austria, in the peculiar circumstances surrounding the murder at Sarajevo.¹⁵ The counsel Germany could tender to Austria was weakened by the fact that the intervention of Germany against Austria in 1913, which averted war, had not improved the relations between Austria and Servia, but had produced the assassination; as Servia imagined, with some justice as events turned out, that *the politics of assassination were not viewed unfavorably in Russia.* It

¹¹ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," p. 116.

¹² Russian Orange Book, *Manchester Guardian*, September 10, 1910.

¹³ This statement of the Tsar does not accord with a telegram from Sazonoff to the Berlin Ambassador on 28th July: "The Imperial Government will announce to-morrow (29th) the mobilization in certain districts." Sazonoff was obviously trying to mislead the German Government. The Foreign Office introduction to the Penny Book, "Great Britain and the European Crisis," states "Russia ordered a partial mobilization on the 29th July." The Tsar's telegram is quite inconsistent with that. "Why we are at War," p. 172.

¹⁴ "Why we are at War," p. 139.

¹⁵ The Kaiser, in a telegram to the Tsar on the 29th July, urged: "I think that it is possible for Russia to maintain the rôle of a spectator of the Austro-Servian War without dragging Europe into the most awful war that it has ever experienced."

was not until 1st August, as the British Ambassador at Vienna states, that Austria replied to the Russian move. "General mobilization of army and fleet," is the laconic message. On the same date it is noted by Sir E. Grey: "The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador declared the readiness of his Government to discuss the substance of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia."¹⁶ But the Russian mobilization did not cease. Germany asked that it should be stopped; and no answer was returned. The German representatives were telegraphing that France and Russia were pressing on with their mobilization; and Sir E. Grey had already informed the Austrian Ambassador that the British Fleet would be kept together, as the situation was difficult.¹⁷ *It is known now that transports were being collected together in the mouth of the Thames on the 31st July.* Faced with this crisis, Germany lost her nerve, and mobilized her forces late on the 31st July. On the same date, the German Ambassador in Paris was instructed: "Please ask French Government whether it intends to remain neutral in a Russo-German War."¹⁸ He answered on 1st August: "Upon my repeated definite inquiry whether France would remain neutral in the event of a Russo-German war, the Prime Minister declared that France would do that which her interests dictated."¹⁹

II

BRITAIN, BELGIUM, FRANCE, AND GERMANY

The second part of this drama may be said to open at the peaceful town of Andover, in Hampshire, where a certain Captain Faber, M.P., delivered a speech in the month of November, 1911. He informed his audience that "he was not going to gloss over or pass over anything, and he was going to dwell on the late crisis in the European situation. That crisis was brought about over the state of Morocco, and the crisis between France and Germany was exceedingly grave, and at that time there was a division in the Cabinet as to whether we should stick to France or not. He knew the names of the men who wanted to stick to France in the Cabinet and the names of those who did not. The names of the men who decided to honorably stick to France were Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill. Those two men were in favor of sticking to and abiding by the treaty with France. . . . The idea at the time of the late stress was to send six divisions of regular troops to help our ally, France." (*Andover Times*, 16th November, 1911.)

That speech naturally caused a stir in political circles by reason of its positive and grave assertions. On 16th November, 1911, Mr.

¹⁶ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," p. 98.

¹⁷ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," p. 43.

¹⁸ "Why we are at War," p. 173.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

Primrose asked Sir E. Grey whether "he will state what are our engagements with foreign Powers involving armed intervention or support." The reply by Sir E. Grey was: "All treaties concluded by H.M. Government since 1898 and engagements with foreign Powers that might involve armed intervention have been laid before Parliament." On the 27th November, 1911, Sir C. Kinloch-Cooke inquired whether the Declaration between France and Great Britain as to Morocco, signed on 8th April, 1904, was interpreted by either the French or British Governments "to mean and to include military and naval support under any and what circumstances"? Mr. Acland answered: "An agreement to afford diplomatic support does not impose on any Power an obligation, either to give or to withhold military or naval support." On the same date, Sir E. Grey delivered a speech in which he remarked: "Let us try to put an end to some of the suspicions with regard to secrecy. We have laid before the House of Commons the secret articles of the Agreement with France in 1904. There are no other engagements. . . . No British Government could embark upon a war without public opinion behind it, and such engagements as there are which really commit Parliament to anything of that kind are contained in treaties or agreements which have been laid before the House. For ourselves, we have not made a single secret article of any kind since we came into office." Such was the position in 1911. In his fatal speech of the 3rd August, 1914, Sir E. Grey read the following document, technically known as an *aide-mèmoire*, which he had written to the French Ambassador in London on 22nd November, 1912: "My dear Ambassador,—From time to time in recent years the French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that consultation between experts is not and ought not to be regarded as an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency that has not yet arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British Fleets respectively at the present moment is not based upon an engagement to co-operate in war. You have, however, pointed out that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know whether it could, in that event, depend upon the armed assistance of the other." Then comes the operative part, in which was an undertaking of the highest importance: "*I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace*" (just observe how far-reaching those words might become in certain eventualities) "it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common." Between

two private individuals an instrument so worded would be regarded as a contract in terms as well as in honor. Yet Sir Edward Grey admitted, in the same speech, that he did not know what the outcome of such a bargain might be, because he continued: "We are not parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance. *We do not even know the terms of that Alliance.*" That is a confession of incompetence, because no such letter should have been given to the French Ambassador until disclosure had been permitted of the obligations of France toward Russia.

Reports emanating from Paris soon began to circulate alleging the existence of this document. In February, 1913, Lord Hugh Cecil, in the debate on the Address, pointed out: "There is a very general belief that this country is under an obligation, not a Treaty obligation, but an obligation arising out of an assurance given by the Ministry in the course of diplomatic negotiations, to send a very large armed force out of this country to operate in Europe." Mr. Asquith intervened at once, saying: "I ought to say that it is not true." How can that denial be reconciled with the contents of the letter addressed to the Ambassador? On 24th March, 1913, the Prime Minister was again questioned: "Whether the foreign policy of this country is at the present time unhampered by any treaties, agreements, or obligations under which British military forces would, in certain eventualities, be called upon to be landed on the Continent?" Mr. Asquith replied: "As has been repeatedly stated, this country is not under any obligation, *not public and known to Parliament, which compels it to take part in any war.*" **That answer was an untruth.** On the 28th April, 1914, more rumors on the subject being current, Sir Edward Grey was further interrogated: "Whether the policy of this country still remained one of freedom from all obligations to engage in military operations on the Continent?" He answered: "The position now remains the same as was stated by the Prime Minister in answer to a question on 24th March, 1913." That was a most disingenuous and tricky reply. In May, 1914, there was a discussion in the Russian Duma on the relations between Britain and Russia. That topic was debated in secret, and Sir Edward Grey has declined to publish the British Ambassador's report as to what transpired in that debate; but, on the 11th June, 1914, Sir Edward Grey was asked: "Whether any naval agreement had been recently entered into between Russia and Great Britain, and whether any negotiations with a view to a naval agreement have recently taken place or are now pending between Russia and Great Britain." The Foreign Secretary dealt with the question in a most elaborate and formal manner: "The Prime Minister replied last year to the question of the Hon. Member that if a war arose between European Powers there were no unpublished agreements *which would hamper or restrict the freedom of the Government or of Parliament to decide whether or not Great Britain should participate in a war.* That answer covers both questions on the Paper. *It remains as true to-day as it was a year ago.* No negotia-

tions have since been concluded with any Power that would make the statement less true. No such negotiations are in progress, and none are likely to be entered upon as far as I can judge." **All this time Sir Edward Grey had in his possession a copy of the letter he had written himself to M. Cambon that committed Britain to every kind of Continental adventure into which Russia might drag France.** The concluding sentence of this statement of Sir Edward Grey, in the circumstances, is a masterpiece of misrepresentation: "But if any agreement were to be concluded that made it necessary to withdraw or modify the Prime Minister's statement of last year which I have quoted, *it ought, in my opinion, to be, and I suppose that it would be, laid before Parliament.*" That is the mental state of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, whose appeals to heaven and to national honor read a little strangely in view of the falsity of their representations to Parliament, the custodian of national honor. It is a curious commentary upon these repudiations that the American Press, on June 20, 1914, *before the assassination at Sarajevo*, published a report that a naval convention had been signed between Russia and Britain under which, in the case of a Russo-German war, Britain would render assistance to Russia by naval operations. **It is right to add that Sir Edward Grey has strenuously contradicted that report; but the reader must judge what value he will attach to contradictions emanating from Sir Edward Grey.**

The position of Belgium must next engage our attention. It has been reiterated that Britain is fighting in this war because there was some treaty under which the neutrality of Belgium was guaranteed in a European war. Neither the Prime Minister nor Sir Edward Grey has enlightened the world as to the text of that guarantee. The present writer has been through Hertslet's "Map of Europe by Treaty," and has failed to discover any such instrument. The Treaties of 1831 and 1839 contain merely this: "Article VII.: Belgium shall form an independent and perpetually neutral State. *It shall be bound to observe such neutrality toward all other States.*"²⁰ That is a common form stipulation which is always inserted on the creation of small buffer States like Belgium. There is also the fact that on 9th August, 1870, Great Britain and Prussia entered upon a treaty "relative to the independence and neutrality of Belgium." Article I. of that Treaty pledged Prussia to respect the neutrality of Belgium during the Franco-Prussian War. Article II. provided for joint measures against France should France violate the territories of Belgium. Article III. provided that the Treaty should only be binding on the High Contracting Parties during the Franco-Prussia War. "On the expiration of that time the independence and neutrality of Belgium will, so far as the High Con-

²⁰ Cf. "Case of Belgium," facsimile print of agreement for co-operation between England and Belgium found in archives of Brussels War Office and published by *The Fatherland*.—Ed.

tracting Parties are respectively concerned, continue to rest as heretofore on Article I. of the Quintuple Treaty of the 19th April, 1839." Sir E. Hertslet has a note that that Treaty is No. 183 in his book. Article I. of that document simply says: "H.M. the King of the Netherlands engages to cause to be immediately converted into a Treaty with H.M. the King of the Belgians, the Articles annexed to the present Act, and agreed upon by common consent, under the auspices of the Courts of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia." That the neutrality of Belgium doctrine is more complicated than the problem of the Danish Duchies, reputed as the most abstruse question known in the history of diplomacy, is the only determination that one can arrive at from the documents; *and it is criminal that Britain should have been plunged into a European War on a pretext of this character.*²¹ Britain owed one duty to Belgium; and that is a duty which does not seem to have been performed, namely, to give Belgium sound advice. Britain had never guaranteed to protect the neutrality of Belgium during a Continental War for the excellent reason that the guarantee was impossible of performance. The neutrality of Belgium could only be upheld by force of arms. Belgium should have been warned by Britain that it was unlikely that the British troops could be brought to Belgium in time to render the Belgian forces any assistance; and that it was improbable that the French Army, owing to its general state of disorganization, could promptly aid the Belgian troops. *If that counsel were given by Britain, and still Belgium was willing to risk a conflict against Germany's overwhelming strength, then Belgium has her own Government to thank for the devastation which has been wrought in her territories. If Britain and France led the Belgians to believe that the French and English troops would effect a junction with the Belgian Army outside Brussels, then Belgium has been the catspaw of Britain and France;* because no military officer of repute has ever contended that it was possible to defend Belgium from German invasion ever since Germany constructed the network of strategical railways which runs to the Belgian frontier. It may be that King Albert of Belgium

²¹ Mr. Gladstone, speaking on 10th August, 1870, said: "There is, I admit, the obligation of the Treaty. It is not necessary, nor would time permit me, to enter into the complicated question of the nature of the obligations of that Treaty, but I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it irrespectively altogether of the position in which it may find itself when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises." He had previously observed: "It is said that if Belgium were in the hands of a hostile Power the liberties of this country would not be worth 24 hours' purchase. I protest against that statement. A statement more exaggerated, a statement more extravagant I never heard fall from the lips of any member of this House." Our alarmists might keep that in mind.

(An article of the Hague Convention guaranteeing the inviolability of neutral States was nullified by the refusal of England and France to ratify it. See "Current Misconceptions about the War," published by *The Fatherland*.—Ed.)

was actuated by ambition, and that Belgium is to be rewarded at the expense of Luxemburg, in which case the transaction is even more scandalous. Had Belgium surrendered to "force majeure," insisting on substantial compensation for the trespass committed by the German troops, no one could have doubted her wisdom, nor suspected her honor.

As already demonstrated, Germany attempted to get some statement from France concerning the latter's attitude in a Russo-German war, but without result. The next move by Germany was to ascertain the intentions of Britain. The Emperor had some ground for hoping that Britain would remain neutral, as he had prevented a European coalition against Britain in 1900-1901 to compel Britain to give terms to the Boers. The Kaiser, in 1908, had allowed an interview to be published in *The Daily Telegraph*, which was summarized in the Annual Register. "He (the Emperor William) had proved his friendship for England by refusing to receive the Boer delegates at Berlin, while the European peoples had received and fêted them; by refusing the invitation of France and Russia to join with them in calling upon England to put an end to the Boer War; and by sending to Windsor a plan of campaign against the Boers in December, 1899, drawn up by himself, and submitted to his general staff for criticism, which ran very much on the same lines as that which was adopted by Lord Roberts." Neither the French nor Russian Governments ventured to contradict this account, which was amplified in the debates in the Reichstag. Finding war with France was inevitable, the German Chancellor made overtures to Britain which, by some misuse of language, have been described as infamous. *What the German Chancellor offered, according to Sir E. Goschen, was to guarantee the territorial integrity of France if Germany were successful in defeating Russia and France, which was a remote contingency. There may be some hidden wickedness in this suggestion, but the present writer can only see that it was a business proposal. Sir Edward Grey rejected this proposition. Then Prince Lichnowsky put forward a second basis, as Sir Edward Grey wired on August 1. "He asked me whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian neutrality, we would engage to remain neutral. I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All I could say was that our attitude would be determined largely by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone. The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her Colonies might be guaranteed. I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar*

terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.”²² Sir Edward Grey has since contended that Prince Lichnowsky was not authorized to negotiate on this basis and was being deceived by his superiors in Berlin. That argument is founded upon the unshakable conviction in Sir Edward Grey’s mind that Germany was intending to fight the world all at once. That is rather ridiculous, considering that the hopeless nature of such a conflict would restrain any Power from embarking upon it. On the 2nd August Sir Edward Grey handed M. Cambon this memorandum: “I am authorized to give an assurance that, if the German Fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping the British Fleet will give all the protection in its power. This assurance must not be taken as binding H.M. Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German Fleet takes place.”²³ *That was an extraordinary communication which, as Germany and France were at war, amounted to a declaration of hostility against Germany; it was an act of war by Britain against Germany long before Belgian territory had been entered by the German troops.* Had the German Navy steamed into the North Sea on 2nd August it would have been liable to destruction by the British Fleet (*though Britain and Germany were still negotiating*), in accordance with the assurances presented to the French Ambassador. It was an ingenious scheme, but hardly of a nature to warrant the high moral tone since taken against Germany by the British Ministers! On August 1st, Prince Lichnowsky telegraphed to Berlin: “Sir E. Grey has just called me to the telephone and asked whether I thought I could say that in the event of France remaining neutral in a Russo-German War we should not attack the French. I told him I thought I could accept the responsibility for this.”²⁴ The Imperial Chancellor replied: “Germany is ready to take up the English proposal if England guarantees with her forces the absolute neutrality of France in a Russo-German conflict. . . . We promise that the French frontier shall not be passed by our troops before 7 P.M. on Monday, August 3rd, if England’s consent is given in the meantime.”²⁵ France, however, was determined to support Russia; so that that proposal fell through. *If France had remained neutral, Belgium would have been saved much misery, and France and Britain much blood and treasure.* Sir Edward Grey should have warned France more sternly of the consequences of involving her fortunes in a struggle between Slav and Teuton.²⁶ Also he should never have committed Britain in 1912 to a blind support of France, without ac-

²² “Great Britain and the European Crisis,” Document 123, p. 93.

²³ “Great Britain and the European Crisis,” Document 148, p. 105.

²⁴ *The Times*, August 27, 1914.

²⁵ *The Times*, August 27, 1914.

²⁶ On 29th July Sir E. Grey expressed to M. Cambon his opinion that Britain had no interest in the supremacy of Slav or Teuton in the Balkans, which is the origin of this war.

quainting the Cabinet with his ignorance of the terms of the Franco-Russian Alliance. The document of 1912 should have been disclosed to the British Parliament at the time of dispatch; because, then, the German statesmen would have known how desperate the situation might become. Sir Edward Grey laid a snare for the House of Commons, out of which, in the excited condition of public opinion and the electrical atmosphere in Europe, the House could not be extricated with honor and dignity. Without reading or disclosing the last-quoted telegrams to Parliament, Sir Edward Grey had the effrontery to tell the House of Commons on the 3rd August: "We have disclosed our mind to the House of Commons. We have disclosed the issue and the information which we have." *He had these documents in his possession but concealed them; nor have they been published in the White Paper.* The Kaiser himself wired to King George: "If France offers me her neutrality, which must be guaranteed by the English Army and Navy, I will, of course, cease to consider an attack on France, and use my troops in another direction. I hope that France will not be nervous. The troops on my frontier are being held back by telegram and telephone from passing the French frontier."²⁷ *King George replied that there had been a misunderstanding, and that negotiations could not proceed on those lines: and war ensued. Germany had lost some valuable hours and had endeavored to keep France and Britain out of war, knowing that her best chance of success was in France, as Russia was almost invulnerable to invasion. Yet the Jingo Party in Britain would impute the whole blame for this cruel war to the artful maneuvers of the Kaiser.* That is a supposition which rests upon the absurd assumption that Germany would risk a war with Russia, France, Britain, and Belgium at the same moment! There is some element of truth in the comments of Herr von Jagow, as recorded by the British Ambassador at Berlin: "Herr von Jagow expressed his poignant regret at the crumbling of his entire policy, and that of the Chancellor, which had been to make friends with Great Britain, and then, through Great Britain, to get closer to France."²⁸ The Chancellor expressed himself more strongly: "What we had done was unthinkable; it was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for life against two assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen."²⁹ After all, Britons should reflect that it would have been very unpleasant had Germany joined a European Coalition on behalf of the Boers. Germany, no doubt, refused to do so in her own interests, as the Kaiser did not believe that it was to the advantage of Germany that Britain should be crippled by a European Coalition. It is, unfortunately, the present writer's view that the same observation is applicable to the situation of to-day; and that *Britain never entered*

²⁷ *The Times*, August 27, 1914, *The Daily News*, August 26, 1914.

²⁸ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," p. 111.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

upon a more insane campaign than this campaign, in which she is helping to destroy Germany in the interests of Russia and France.

On the 3rd August the British Minister at Brussels wired the following information: "French Government have offered through their Military Attaché the support of five French Army Corps to the Belgian Government. Following reply has been received to-day: 'We are sincerely grateful to the French Government for offering eventual support. *In the actual circumstances, however, we do not propose to appeal to the guarantee of the Powers.* Belgian Government will decide later on the action which they may think it necessary to take.'"³⁰ Up till that late hour, the Belgian Government was seemingly willing to adopt an attitude of enforced neutrality, as Belgium could not hope permanently to contest the march of the Germany Army. On August 4th, the King of the Belgians addressed an appeal to King George, which is thus worded: "I make a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium."³¹ The mystery of Belgium is almost insoluble on these documents, as that is a telegram inviting only *diplomatic intervention, and not armed intervention*, to preserve *not* the neutrality of Belgium, but the integrity of Belgium. The German Government, according to Sir Edward Grey, had delivered a note to Belgium, "proposing friendly neutrality, entailing free passage through Belgian territory, and promising to maintain the independence and integrity of the kingdom and its possessions at the conclusion of peace, threatening, in case of refusal, to treat Belgium as an enemy."³² On August 4th, Sir Edward Grey wired to the British Minister at Brussels: "You should inform Belgian Government that if pressure is applied to them by Germany to induce them to depart from neutrality, *His Majesty's Government expect that they will resist by any means in their power.*"³³ It was a terribly selfish act to press that advice upon Belgium, when no substantial assistance, in the military sense, could be rendered to save Belgian territories from devastation.

III

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

It may be asked: "Well, but granted all this criticism is sound, what can be done now?" That is a question often put by those persons who explain that Britain "must go through with it." Surely one is entitled to know "To what end is this policy directed?" The Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, and Mr. Lloyd George, in their recruiting orations, have introduced a lot of irrelevant and prejudicial matters;

³⁰ "Great Britain and the European Crisis," p. 106.

³² "Great Britain and the European Crisis," p. 153.

³³ *Ibid.*, Document 155, p. 108.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

but on *that* principal point on which more information is needed their silence has been unanimous and complete. The Prime Minister has explained that Britain is fighting for Belgian neutrality. One cannot fight for a myth. Belgian neutrality vanished the moment the first German patrol crossed the frontier. His next argument was that German militarism must be crushed. Well, can it be done? *The militarism of Germany has this excuse, that it has proved itself a fairly efficient weapon against a powerful combination.* In these days, it is questionable whether a well-organized composite European State can be thoroughly beaten. Britain had enough trouble to subjugate the small Boer Republics in South Africa. The partition of Germany and Austria-Hungary may be the motive of the Tsar; but what benefit can accrue to Britain or France from such madness? Before Germany and Austria surrender to Russia, millions of men will have died, as many of the races in Austria and Germany must literally strive to their last man against Russian control. That is the commonsense of the situation. *Moreover, there is a certain amount of humbug in this outcry against German militarism. In the centuries before German unity was accomplished, Berlin was more often in the hands of a foreign invader than any other capital in Europe. Bismarck calculated that the French had occupied Berlin over twenty times, while the German troops had been in Paris twice. Prussia and Brandenburg were two of the most invaded countries in Europe before the ring of bayonets was welded together.* That is historical fact. On the other hand, Russia has a militarist propaganda of the most evil kind; and the Dreyfus case demonstrated what form French militarism could assume. Nor is British navalism innocuous in its spirit! Through that navalism, Britain has assailed nation after nation in Europe that has threatened her trade supremacy; and Germany, the latest comer, is being similarly handled. "On the knee, you dog!" was a phrase that rang unpleasantly through England not long ago. The militarism of Lord Kitchener in Egypt and in India was as bad as anything one could want in that line. Mr. Asquith, in his orations about Britain struggling for the liberties of Europe, might reassure us about the restoration of the statutory British liberties which have been whittled away in the past two months by a series of Royal Proclamations.

In 1899, Britain was righteously engaged in the destruction of "Krugerism"; to-day it is "Kaiserism" which is the target of Britain's virtuous indignation. By an ironic stroke of Fate, this year (1914) was the scene of the greatest procession ever organized by British Trade Unionism, when hundreds of thousands of men protested against the deportation of Englishmen without trial or without charge by the successors of "Krugerism." "Krugerism" never deported British subjects without trial and without charge; but "Krugerism" did resist the importation of Chinese "blackleg" labor. The disappearance of

"Krugerism" was rather a barren victory; it certainly was an expensive one. *Many wonderful things were forecasted as likely to occur under the British régime in South Africa; but the world still awaits something newer than the old tyranny of capitalism.*

Another argument for the war is that the principle of the freedom of nationalities is involved. On which side? Germany and Austria have been promised partition by the genial Tsar and the witty Frenchman! *In the past twelve years, there have been five States whose independence has been taken from them without any protest from Britain.* They were all examples where the nationalities were distinct. The Transvaal and the Orange Free State had their independence destroyed by Britain. Persian integrity was broken into by the thieves' covenant of 1907 between Russia and Britain; and Mr. Morgan Schuster, the American who was reorganizing Persian financial administration, was expelled through Russo-British intrigue. Morocco was partitioned between France and Spain with British connivance. The case of Korea was almost parallel to that of Belgium. The independence and neutrality of Korea were guaranteed by Japan, Russia, Britain and France, under a number of Treaties. The Korean Queen was foully murdered by Japanese agents. The Japanese, some time afterward, invaded Korea and compelled the Koreans to fight against Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. Russia and Korea protested to Britain and France; but, on that occasion, which was a far more shameless breach in international law, Britain and France thought it convenient to forget their "obligations of honor," "their written bond," "their sacred covenant," or whatever high-sounding phrase may occur to the recruiting orators of the Cabinet! Korea was annexed by the Japanese, and has regretted her unhappy fate ever since. *The Germans were not parties to any of these touching incidents in the War of Liberation on behalf of small nationalities; probably, because they were elbowed out by the Triple Entente.* Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey, by the way, were the two prominent Liberal leaders who deserted Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman when the latter was endeavoring to obtain some undertaking that the independence of the Orange Free State would be preserved. The sudden affection for principle exhibited by Mr. Asquith nowadays is somewhat unconvincing when compared with past events in his life.

Ah! but it will be proclaimed, "What about the German atrocities and the road-hog of Europe?" That is the only topic that the Government has really left; and it is a strange defence for a war which ought never to have been undertaken. Undoubtedly some terrible crimes have been perpetrated by the German soldiery; but as the worst crime under most penal codes is "Thou shalt not kill," can one be astonished that the authorization to large bodies of men to commit the capital offence should bring in its train all the lesser crimes of rape, arson, mutilation, etc.? Once the passions are unloosed, and

war *does* unloose the worst and most deeply ingrained passion of all, to wit, the desire to slay, it is silly to complain about the excesses that will follow. The burning of Louvain, Malines, Rheims, are artistic calamities; but they are specks compared with the spectacle of ten millions of men slaughtering each other seven days a week; because these Christian Generals pursue their vocation with special ardor on Sunday. The Christian denominations lament the bombardment of cathedrals; but the dominion of Satan has no need for those buildings. The Prince of Darkness is ruling this world, and the fact that he is being supported by all the self-styled "Vicars of Christ" simply proves that the latter have been masquerading under false colors.

Those editors who have been denouncing the German atrocities have not protested against the action of the Censor in refusing permission to publish the counter charges. This is most unfair procedure. Both sides' allegations should be allowed a hearing or should be suppressed—not one to the exclusion of the other. Russia and Japan have been the subject of some strictures by the ex-Press Censor, Mr. F. E. Smith, in his work on "International Law," which were to this effect: "On November 21st, 1894, the Japanese Army stormed Port Arthur, and for five days indulged in the promiscuous slaughter of non-combatants: men, women and children, with every circumstance of barbarity." The *Times* correspondent reported: "Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday were spent by the soldiery in murder and pillage from dawn to dark, in mutilation, in every conceivable kind of nameless atrocity, until the town became a ghastly inferno, to be remembered with a fearsome shudder until one's dying day." Mr. F. E. Smith adds: "The details of this awful scene completely warrant this eloquent and emphatic condemnation." *So much for the gentle Japanese.* Next Mr. F. E. Smith details the record of the pastoral and simple Russian, as he is being now pictured by H. G. Wells and other *littérateurs*: "The recurrent tradition of Suvaroff's savagery at Ismail and Warsaw found a reecho in the events of the Crimean War and of Akkel Teke, and culminated in 1900 in the cold-blooded slaughter by the Russians of the whole Chinese population of Blagovestchenk and district. . . . The massacre of Blagovestchenk was described by a Russian officer in the following words: 'The Cossacks took all the Chinese and forced them into the river on boats that could not carry them, and when the women threw their children on shore and begged that they at least might be saved the Cossacks caught the babies on their bayonets and cut them in pieces.' . . . Nothing worse than this massacre of Blagovestchenk has ever been related of the unspeakable Turk." That was Mr. Smith's judgment, writing in 1907, the very year in which Britain and Russia entered into a Treaty to undermine Persian independence! The "red rubber" denunciations of Belgium cannot have been forgotten; and the report of Sir Roger Casement on

Belgian rule in the Congo Free State is still available to those who want to be sickened with the horror of man's "inhumanity to man!" The International Commission on the atrocities in the Balkan War condemned the Servians as the worst offenders. *Even now Belgium has not been laid waste as the Boer Republics were by Lord Kitchener and Lord Roberts.* The sack of Pekin by the troops of the Allied Powers in 1900 should lead the European statesmen to refrain from this sort of denunciation, until the Christian communities of Europe have offered some sort of reparation to the "Heathen Chinee" for the abominations which disgraced that punitive expedition.

This war is being supported by sham arguments and hypocritical appeals to sentiment. Its pretended cause, "the neutrality of Belgium," is non-existent. Its real cause, the wish to beat the German Navy, remains to be examined. On the face of it, it would seem a convenient opportunity to annihilate the German Navy; but surface considerations are not always the soundest. Just let us examine the amazing procedure adopted by the statesmen of Britain to preserve Britain's predominance in sea power. The French Fleet, with some British ships, is at present guarding the Mediterranean trade routes in the interests of the trade of France. The Russian Fleet is stationed in the Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Far East; its inactivity is distinctly masterly. Britain has marshalled the whole active strength of the Navy in or about the North Sea so as to strike at the German High Seas Fleet should it venture upon a general battle. As the German Fleet is hopelessly inferior in ships and guns to the British Fleet, its big ships are not likely to risk a general engagement; but its submarines and torpedo boats will make desperate sorties. Notwithstanding Mr. Churchill's reference to "rats in a hole," the Germans are sensible to adopt on sea the tactics followed by the Boers on land. Assuming, however, that public opinion in Germany puts pressure on the German Admiral to endeavor to fight his way out of the Kiel Canal, there may be a titanic sea fight in which the German Fleet would be destroyed and the British Fleet somewhat damaged. Then, at the end of the war, what would be the position in the realm of sea power? Germany's Fleet would have been annihilated; Britain's Fleet would have been damaged; the French Fleet would be peacefully patrolling the Mediterranean; and the Russian, Italian, Japanese, and American Fleets would be intact. The Austrian Fleet will, in all probability, remain in Pola Harbor, which is practically impregnable, as Austria, having no quarrel with either France or Britain, can have no particular wish to jeopardize her small Fleet in combat with the Mediterranean squadrons of Britain and France. The whole burden of contending with the German Fleet has been cast upon Britain. What is the economy or the sanity of this policy, which may leave Britain's Fleet inferior in strength to the combined naval forces of any two of the Powers named?

Is Britain Blameless?

By A. FENNER BROCKWAY, Editor *Manchester Labor Leader*

The matter in the following pages was delivered as a speech under the auspices of the Manchester University Fabian Society, Jan. 21, 1915, on the occasion of a debate between Mr. B. and Prof. Ramsey Muir.

Even pacifists and anti-militarists have been led not merely to acquiesce in but to advocate the prosecution of this war on the ground that it is being fought, on the side of the Allies, to end war, to overthrow militarism, and to vindicate the rights of small peoples. Our poet laureate, Dr. Bridges, has even gone so far as to declare that it is a war of Christ against the Devil.

Well, I hope the optimists may prove right. I hope this war will end war, will overthrow militarism, will establish on a permanent basis the rights of small peoples. I hope so. But one thing is certain: *This war will accomplish none of these things if either side assumes the perfection of Christ for itself and presumes the perfidy of the Devil for its enemy. If each nation remains conscious of the failings of other nations only, the condition of Europe will be no whit better at the end of the war than it is to-day.*

I sometimes envy the man who is satisfied by the popular assurance that Germany alone is evil, that Germany alone is responsible for this war, that Germany alone has outraged morality and international law since the war began. His is such an easy, simple faith. It demands such little thought; every decision is ready-made, cut and dried, complete. But, alas! the least knowledge of foreign relations makes that faith impossible. No nation is white, no nation is black. They are all gray, of different shades of gray perhaps, but not one of them is even approximately white.

Suppose we grant, for the moment, that Germany was chiefly responsible for dropping into the European powder-magazine the spark which at last caused it to explode with such terrible effect (though I should be dishonest if I did not add that personally I believe Russia was equally responsible). Can we lay on that action the entire responsibility for what has occurred? Must we not ask, rather, who contributed the ingredients of which that powder-magazine was composed, the ingredients of Imperialism, of rivalries in armaments, of provocative foreign policies? *If we ask that question I think we shall find the mixture composed of fairly equal parts representative of the*

ambitious Pan-Slavism of Russia, the bumptious and brutal militarism of Germany, and the secret diplomacy of France and Britain.

We have heard much of Germany's contribution to the powder-magazine. I am afraid we shall hear much, after the war, of Russia's contribution. To-night I want to consider Britain's contribution (and France's is inseparably mingled with it). Unless we are prepared to recognize our own share of guilt we have no right to expect others to recognize theirs.

TEN YEARS' DIPLOMATIC WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND GERMANY

Wars of cannon and gun are always preceded by diplomatic wars. The diplomatic war between Britain and Germany began in reality in 1904, when we signed a Declaration of Friendship with France. Until that time we worked more amicably in international affairs with Germany than with France. Close ties of blood united the ruling Houses of the two Empires, and Germany consistently supported our claims in Egypt, then the bone of contention, Bismarck declaring "In Egypt I am English." The dispatch by the Kaiser of a congratulatory telegram to President Kruger after the repulse of the Jameson raid in 1906 caused temporary indignation, but that the effects were not very serious is proved by the fact that at the outbreak of the Boer War Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the Foreign Secretary, urged that a new Triple Alliance should be formed between Britain, Germany, and the United States, whilst Lord Salisbury, the Premier, stated at the subsequent Lord Mayor's banquet that the relations of the two countries were "everything we could desire." It is true that during the South African War Germany's sympathy for the Boers created some ill-feeling between the two Governments, but the Kaiser, obviously anxious to avoid a dispute, refused to receive Kruger and the Boer Generals in audience and acted with strict propriety. There was a good deal of criticism in Germany of the actions of the British troops in South Africa; still, such criticism was also freely expressed in France and of itself cannot, therefore, have been responsible for the changed relations in Europe. We shall have to seek some other cause of the alienation between Britain and Germany.

I think we shall be more accurate if we trace the antagonism which sprang up between Germany and Britain to Germany's natural growth as a Power, and to the military and naval expression of that growth. Germany had enemies on either frontier: on one side was the ever-present menace of Russia, whose people belonged to a race the hereditary enemy of the Teutons; on the other side was France thirsting to revenge the humiliation of 1871. If we accept military standards, it was absolutely essential that Germany should have a supreme

army; just as essential as that Britain should have a supreme navy.

But, you ask, if we grant that a supreme army was necessary to Germany, why did she need a strong navy? Because she was rapidly developing a large export trade which, since merchant vessels were liable to capture in time of war, needed the protection of a fleet. That was the reason why Germany so largely increased her ship-building program in 1900. At The Hague Conference in 1907, if I may anticipate for a moment, she supported the proposals that merchant ships should be immune from attack in time of war, but the proposition was defeated, in great part owing to Britain's opposition. *Since a large proportion of her foreign trade passed through the English Channel to North and South America, Africa, and the East, and since the English Channel, and, indeed, the trade routes of the world were patrolled by the Fleet of another Power, have we any reason to be surprised that Germany continued to increase the size of her navy?*

THE ANGLO-FRENCH ENTENTE—AS THE PUBLIC KNEW IT

But to return to 1904. The Anglo-French Declaration, as published, was in no sense inimical to the welfare of Germany, and Germany welcomed rather than deplored it. On the eve of the signature of the treaty, Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, informed Prince Radolin, the German Ambassador in Paris, of its terms, and the Prince pronounced it to be "very natural and perfectly justified." On its publication, Bülow stated in the Reichstag that he had no reason to believe that the agreement between France and Britain was directed against Germany in any way. Germany, he added, had no interest in the maintenance of unfriendly relations between Britain and France.

These utterances do not suggest that Germany was imbued with any unreasoning opposition to Britain at this time.

It ought to be quite possible for two nations to sign a treaty of friendship without detrimentally affecting a third nation, and the enthusiasm with which the *Entente* with France was welcomed in Britain certainly did not signify, so far as the public was concerned, any antagonism to Germany. It was, rather, an expression of relief that the long-standing differences with France, fraught with no little danger, had been amicably settled. For many years France and Britain had been quarreling over Egypt, from which we had repeatedly declared our intention of withdrawing. In 1895 the British Government had announced that it would regard an attempt by another Power to occupy any part of the Nile Valley as an unfriendly act, but, despite this, Captain Marchand was despatched from the French Congo in 1896 to establish a post on the Upper Nile. He

reached Fashoda, and war was only averted by the unconditional withdrawal of France.

By the treaty of 1904 this quarrel was concluded. France agreed to recognize Britain's special claims in Egypt, and in return Britain agreed to recognize France's claims in Morocco. A number of other differences between the two nations was settled, but for our immediate purpose it is the agreement with regard to Morocco which is important. You must bear with me if I discuss it in some detail, for out of it the present conflict has largely grown.

So long ago as 1880 the interest of all the Powers in Morocco and the independence of the Moroccan Empire were acknowledged by the Madrid Conference, at which the representatives of the principal nations conferred on a basis of absolute equality with the representatives of the Sultan. *From the earliest days Germany has been specially concerned in Morocco. Two of the foremost explorers of Morocco were Germans—Lenz and Rohlfe—and her trade with the Moors has always been considerable.* In 1890 Germany concluded a commercial treaty with the Sultan, and ever since the relations between the two nations have been close. M. Deschanel, the President of the French Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, admitted this generously in a speech delivered on December 16, 1911, when recommending the ratification of the French-German Convention. He said:

Could we afford to ignore the efforts of Germany for half a century, the travels of her explorers, the activity of her colonists, her agricultural and mineral enterprises, her steamship lines, her post offices, etc. . . .?

It will be clear that Germany had as much right to claim to be consulted in the decision of Morocco's fate as any other Power.

The Anglo-French Declaration, as published, did not, however, alter the status of Morocco, and Germany was content. In Clause 2 this is stated explicitly: "The Government of the French Republic declare that they have no intention of altering the political status of Morocco." By Clause 4 the two Governments declare themselves "equally attached to the principles of commercial liberty." What, then, were the special French interests in Morocco which Britain recognized in return for acknowledgment of her claims in Egypt? They were limited to assistance in the preservation of order and in "administrative, economic, financial, and military reforms," and were stated to belong to France more particularly only because "her dominions are coterminous for a great distance with those of Morocco." To such a claim of particular interests Germany could not, so long as the integrity of the country was not violated, reasonably object.

By Article 8 of this treaty France promised Britain that she would come to an understanding with Spain on the Moroccan question, and later in the year a treaty between France and Spain was concluded. It consisted, as far as the public was made aware, of two clauses, the

first stating that both Powers "remain firmly attached to the integrity of the Moorish Empire under the sovereignty of the Sultan," the second expressing Spain's adherence to the Anglo-French Declaration. To this treaty Germany could no more legitimately take objection than to the previous one, though we may surmise she would naturally be a little perplexed as to its *raison d'être*.

THE ANGLO-FRENCH ENTENTE—AS THE DIPLOMATISTS KNEW IT

Before long, however, Germany had definite grounds for suspicion. Reuter announced, with evident authority, that there was a number of secret clauses attached to the Franco-Spanish Declaration, that "every detail of the negotiations has been made known to the British Government," and that "the terms of the new treaty are regarded with satisfaction by the Governments of London, Paris, and Madrid." It became clear to Germany that, despite her extensive interests, she was being ignored in the settlement of Morocco's destiny.

It was not until November, 1911, after Britain, France, and Germany had been brought to the verge of war on the Moroccan question, that the public was informed of the contents of the secret clauses and made aware, too, that the Franco-British Treaty also contained secret clauses. In the public clauses of the Franco-British Declaration, France, it will be remembered, affirmed that she had no intention of altering the political status of Morocco. *In the secret clauses of the same treaty the division of Morocco as a Protectorate under France and Spain was prefigured; in the secret clauses of the Franco-Spanish agreement, drawn up at Britain's request, the terms of the partition of Morocco were stated in detail!*

I will refrain from characterizing such diplomatic methods myself. I am content to quote the words of Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, one of the foremost French Senators, who spoke thus during the Foreign Office debate on February 6, 1912:

The French Parliament, by an abuse morally, if not constitutionally unpardonable, was kept in ignorance of this policy. . . . Now the whole effect of the arrangement of 1904 appears in its truth and in its vanity. It was a treaty of friendship with England, recognizing the freedom of our political action in Morocco and also proclaiming our will to respect the integrity of that country; that was what the public knew and approved. But the public was ignorant that at the same time by other treaties and contradictory clauses hidden from it, the partition of Morocco between Spain and France was prepared, of that Morocco of which we guaranteed the integrity. There existed two irreconcilable French policies in Morocco, that of public arrangements, that is to say a policy of integrity which was not the true one; and that of secret arrangements, postulating a Protectorate and the partition of Morocco.

By Article 3 of the secret Franco-British Treaty the two Powers which had publicly declared their allegiance to the independence of Morocco spoke of the time when "the Sultan ceases to exercise au-

thority over it," and defined the sphere which, at such time, should be controlled by Spain. In the secret Franco-Spanish Treaty the contracting Powers not only defined their respective spheres, they immediately arrogated to themselves, or, rather, to their financiers and capitalists, a monopoly in the execution of all public works in Morocco, and limited to thirty years the policy of an "open door" to the traders of all nationalities which the international conference at Madrid had laid down.

The most bigoted anti-German can scarcely be surprised that the German Government should have refused to stand idly by whilst Britain, France, and Spain plotted the partition of Morocco. On March 13, 1905, the Kaiser visited Tangier and delivered a speech to the Sultan's representatives in which he defined Germany's position. "The object of my visit to Tangier," he said, "is to make it known that I am determined to do all in my power to safeguard efficaciously the interests of Germany in Morocco. I look upon the Sultan as an absolutely independent sovereign, and it is with him that I desire to come to an understanding as to the best means to bring that result about."

The Kaiser's intervention led, despite Britain's opposition, to an international conference at Algeiras. The Act of Algeiras was signed by the representatives of all the Great Powers and "in the name of God Almighty" affirmed:

The sovereignty and independence of His Majesty the Sultan,
The integrity of his dominions, and
Economic liberty without any inequality.

The concluding Article (No. 123) read:

All existing Treaties, Conventions, and Arrangements between the signatory Powers and Morocco remain in force. *It is, however, agreed that in case their provisions be found to conflict with those of the present general Act, the stipulations of the latter shall prevail.*

Nevertheless, France proceeded to act as though the Algeiras Conference had never met and the Act of Algeiras had never been penned. It is true that in February, 1909, Germany and France signed a Declaration in which they stated that they were "equally anxious to facilitate the execution of the Act of Algeiras," but her financiers continued to strangle it economically, and in 1910 she began unashamedly to occupy Moorish territory. In March of that year a Frenchman was murdered at Marakash; troops immediately crossed the frontier, occupied Udja, and there remained, despite frequent promises to evacuate. Later in the year she pursued a similar policy on a greater scale at Casablanca. A French-Spanish Syndicate obtained a concession to build a railway from that town inland, and, *despite native protests, it proceeded to construct the line through an*

ancient and revered Moorish cemetery. There was a struggle between the Moors and the European workmen, with the result that several of the latter were killed. The French Fleet thereupon bombarded Casablanca, killing thousands of Moors, and French troops occupied the town, the surrounding district, and also another port, Rabut, after committing ghastly slaughter. The French Government demanded an indemnity of £2,400,000 from the Sultan, and also compensation amounting to £522,784 for the European and Moroccan merchants of Casablanca whose property had suffered during the bombardment!

HOW FRANCE TREATED "A SCRAP OF PAPER"

The climax came in April, 1911, when alarmist reports appeared in the Press that Fez was in the hands of insurgents and the Europeans were in danger. General Moinier hastened to their relief with 30,000 men, the French Government announcing that it would withdraw its troops after succoring the menaced inhabitants. Questioned in the House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey stated that the expedition had its approval, but the German Government addressed a warning to France that it had no information that any of its subjects at Fez were in danger, and, whilst wishing the French mission well in view of the pledge that the force would be withdrawn when its purpose had been accomplished, stated that should this pledge not be kept she would consider that the Act of Algeciras had ceased to be operative and that freedom of action would belong to the Powers.

Even before the French troops had reached Fez the reports of the condition of the city were proved to have been a concoction. I quote from M. Francis de Pressensé, one of the most famous of French publicists:

Already, while the expedition was on its way light began to pierce. Those redoubtable rebels who were threatening Fez had disappeared like the dew in morning. Barely did a few ragged horsemen fire off a shot or two before turning round and riding away at a furious gallop. A too-disingenuous, or too-truthful, correspondent gave the show away. The expeditionary force complains, he gravely records, of the absence of the enemy; the approaching harvest season is keeping all the healthy males in the fields! Thus did the phantom so dexterously conjured by the *Comité du Maroc* for the benefit of its aims disappear in a night. . . . Avowals and disclosures then began in right earnest. One of the correspondents who had contributed his share to the concert of lying news, wrote with an admirable *sang-froid* that, in truth, there had been some exaggeration, that, in point of fact, at no moment had the safety of Fez and its inhabitants been seriously menaced; that the idea of a regular siege and of a sudden capture had been alike chimerical, and that, moreover, so far as the provisions of the place was concerned, he could reassure the most timorous that there was sufficient corn in the city to feed the whole population, plus the expeditionary column, for more than a year! The farce was played. After Casablanca, Fez. France, without realizing it, without wishing it, almost without knowing it, had taken a decisive step. An indefinite occupation of the capital was the natural prelude to a Protectorate. For the clever men who had invented and executed the

scenario there only now remained the task of reaping the fruit of their efforts. The era of concessions, profits, dividends, was about to open. Premature joyfulness! It was the era of difficulties which was at hand.

Encouraged by the French defiance of the Act of Algeciras, Spain proceeded to occupy Northern Morocco, pouring 20,000 troops into the country. At the end of June the French Army still occupied Fez, and Germany thought it high time she should make it clear that she was not to be left unconsidered. *On July 3, 1911, the German cruiser Panther anchored off Agadir. No shot was fired, no troops were landed. But the whole world knew by this silent protest that Germany did not intend, without being consulted, to see the "scrap of paper" signed at Algeciras torn to shreds.*

Curiously enough, Germany's action in despatching the Panther to Agadir caused far more indignation in London than in Paris. Our Foreign Office immediately demanded that we should be a party in the negotiations, but finally we agreed to Germany and France exchanging views, arranging that France should acquaint us with the trend of the conversations. Our attitude remained, however, one of suspicion and distrust. On July 12 we informed the German Foreign Secretary that we inferred that "we were to be excluded from a conversation *a trois* between Germany, France, and Spain," to be assured definitely in reply that "there never had been such an idea" in Germany's mind.

SIR EDWARD GREY BELIEVES "THE TIMES"

Nine days later came the crisis. On July 20 the *Times*¹ created excitement in the select circle among whom it circulates by announcing that Germany was making impossible demands upon France. Its Paris correspondent stated that she was insisting that *the whole of the French Congo* should be ceded to her, and editorially the *Times* added that Germany was also demanding the "contingent reversion held by France over the Congo State." A British naval demonstration at Agadir was suggested as a reply to these monstrous proposals!

Now, the *French Yellow Book on the Moroccan crisis, published in November, 1912, proves that these demands existed only in the imagination of the "Times."* Germany never demanded "the whole of the French Congo" or the "reversion held by France over the Congo State." The interview between the German Foreign Secretary and the French Foreign Minister, on July 16, which the *Times* had purported to describe, had, in fact, concluded quite amicably and, so far from a

¹ The *Times* is the property of the notorious Lord Northcliffe, also owner of the *London Daily Mail*, the *St. Petersburg Novaja Wremja*, the *Paris Mail*, and believed to be the controlling factor in the *Paris Matin*, papers in the Balkan States, in Italy and New York. Mr. A. G. Garvin recently denounced Northcliffe publicly as "a trader in sensation and hate."

deadlock occurring because of Germany's impossible demands, an appointment had been made for a resumption of the conversations during the ensuing week. Germany's proposal had been that France should *exchange* a part of the French Congo—the territory between the ocean and Sangha—for Togoland and the Northern Cameroons, and the Congo State had not even been mentioned.

But Sir Edward Grey accepted the *Times* story. The following day he sent for the German Ambassador and said he had been "made anxious by the news which appeared the day before as to the demands which the German Government had made on the French Government," and gave a warning that Britain could not accept the cession of the French Congo to Germany. The German Ambassador protested that this was not an accurate description of Germany's intentions, but without waiting for the official reply from Berlin, which was received within two days, our Foreign Secretary, with the knowledge of Mr. Asquith but not of the rest of the Cabinet, the same evening delivered, by the medium of Mr. Lloyd George's speech at the Mansion House, what was universally interpreted as an ultimatum to Germany.

For a day or two the issue of war and peace hung in the balance, but the crisis was safely passed and an agreement was reached. It is one of the ironies of diplomacy that the subsequent treaty between France and Germany actually obtained better terms for Britain than those tabled in the secret clauses of the Anglo-French and Franco-Spanish treaties! Germany received "compensations" in the French Congo in exchange for territory in the Upper Cameroons and for the acknowledgment of the French Protectorate in Morocco, but in addition she secured for all the Powers, including Britain, equality of economic opportunity in Morocco, while the 1904 treaties had handed over all public works to French and Spanish capitalists, and had guaranteed an "open door" for the trade of other Powers for thirty years only!

As the French Yellow Book bears witness, it was the attitude of Britain and France at the time of the Agadir incident of 1911 which caused Germany to proceed so vigorously with her preparations for war. There could no longer be any doubt that Britain was cooperating with France against Germany. From this date the extreme military rivalry between France and Germany dates. Out of this incident grew the arrangement between France and Britain whereby the French Fleet was withdrawn from the English Channel and concentrated in the Mediterranean. Indeed, it might with truth be said that so far as Germany and Britain are concerned, the Agadir incident was the preliminary skirmish of the present war.

WHAT OF THE PREMIER'S DENIAL?

I am quite aware that the Premier and the Foreign Secretary repeatedly denied in Parliament, prior to the war, that Britain was committed to support France in case of a conflict with Germany. I am quite aware that Sir Edward Grey in giving our military authorities permission to enter into consultation with the military authorities of France declared that such consultation did not necessarily bind Britain to common action in the case of war. *But I ask you to use your commonsense: Can you conceive the military authorities of two nations preparing, over a period of eight years, a joint plan of campaign unless there was a fairly definite understanding that that plan would one day be put into execution?* Military strategy is not a matter of toy flags and maps. The most elaborate details must be worked out, arrangements for transport, for accommodation, for food supply, for ammunition, and hospital provision must be made, every inch of the country must be known, positions where guns should be placed noted, suitable points of defence and attack marked. Can it seriously be asserted that the military staffs of two Powers would cooperate in matters of this kind unless they were assured that in case of war their cooperation in preparations would develop into cooperation in action?

But my case does not rest on conjecture of this kind. Sir Edward Grey has admitted it. In his speech in the House of Commons on the eve of the declaration of war he announced that he had already given France a pledge that we would prevent the German Fleet reaching her Northern coast, and he argued, rightly I think, that since France had withdrawn her fleet to the Mediterranean and left her Northern and Western coasts unprotected by arrangement with Britain, we were morally bound to defend them against attack. But what does this mean except that we were committed to support France against Germany, quite apart from the immediate issues of the war?

It is here that the seriousness of the position lay. France had Russia as an ally. Sir Edward Grey has acknowledged that he was unaware of the contents of the treaty between France and Russia, that is to say, that he did not know on what terms France was committed to go to war should Russia choose to precipitate a conflict. *In view of our commitments to France, that amounts to a confession that we were, so far as our Foreign Secretary was aware, pledged to plunge into a European war whenever Russia decided it was in her interest to occasion it!*

BELGIUM: ARE WE PARTLY RESPONSIBLE?

Of the negotiations between the Powers immediately prior to the war I am going to say nothing at this moment except that it is clear to the severest critic of Sir Edward Grey that when the car of Europe

which he himself had done so much to drive on to the edge of the precipice hung in suspense over the chasm, he made heroic efforts to jam on the brake and prevent the inevitable catastrophe. But this, too, I must say: that when it became apparent that Russia and France were to fall, he hastened to release the brake and allowed Britain to fall with them. *Had Germany invaded Belgium or not, Britain's secret commitments to France were of such a nature that our Government could not have honorably stood aside.* I have the deepest sympathy with the Belgian people; I do not think the crime which the German Government has committed in invading their territory can be denounced in terms too strong; I recognize that the British people, as distinct from the Government, is animated by large-hearted and generous motives in embarking on this war. *But it is impossible for me to overlook the fact that the foreign policy of the British Government cannot be acquitted of its share of responsibility for occasioning the war, nor can I suppress the voice within which says that had that policy been different the war and the consequent devastation of Belgium might have been averted.'*

If this is to be the last war it must conclude not only in the overthrow of German militarism, it must conclude with the determination of the British people to end for ever *the dishonest and secret diplomacy of the British Foreign Office.*

Why We Are At War

By J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, M.P.

ON that fatal Sunday, the second of August, I met in Whitehall a member of the Cabinet and he told me of the messages and conversations between foreign secretaries and ambassadors which were to be published for the purpose of showing how we strove for peace and how Germany immovably went to war. "It will have a great effect on public opinion," he said, and he was right. It is called "Correspondence Respecting the European Crisis," but is generally referred to as "The White Paper." I wish to comment upon it for the purpose of explaining its significance.

It begins with a conversation between Sir Edward Grey and the German ambassador on July 20 regarding the Austrian threat to punish Servia, and finishes with the delivery of our ultimatum to Germany on August 4. From it certain conclusions appear to be justified, the following in particular:

1. Sir Edward Grey strove to the last to prevent a European war.
2. Germany did next to nothing for peace,¹ but it is not clear whether she actually encouraged Austria to pursue her Servian policy.
3. The mobilization of Russia drove Germany to war.
4. Russia and France strove, from the very beginning, both by open pressure and by wiles, to get us to commit ourselves to support them in the event of war.
5. Though Sir Edward Grey would not give them a pledge he made the German ambassador understand that we might not keep out of the conflict.

6. During the negotiations Germany tried to meet our wishes on certain points so as to secure our neutrality. Sometimes her proposals were brusque, but no attempt was made by us to negotiate diplomatically to improve them. They were all summarily rejected by Sir Edward Grey. Finally, *so anxious was Germany to confine the limits of the war, the German ambassador asked Sir Edward Grey to propose his own conditions of neutrality, and Sir Edward Grey declined*

¹ This conclusion, of course, is contradicted by the evidence, cited elsewhere, that the Kaiser tried to the last to localize the war between Austria-Hungary and Servia, and continued to plead with the Czar for peace until overwhelming proof was forthcoming that convinced him that his efforts were encouraged by the Czar in order to gain time for Russia to complete her mobilization. Naturally this is not stated in the English White Book.—Ed.

to discuss the matter. This fact was suppressed by Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith in their speeches in Parliament.

7. When Sir Edward Grey failed to secure peace between Germany and Russia, he worked deliberately to involve us in the war, using Belgium as his chief excuse.

That is the gist of the White Paper. It proves quite conclusively that those who were in favor of neutrality before the second of August ought to have remained in favor of it after the White Paper was published.

That Sir Edward Grey should have striven for European peace and then, when he failed, that he should have striven with equal determination to embroil Great Britain, seems contradictory. But it is not, and the explanation of why it is not is the justification of those of us, who for the last eight years have regarded Sir Edward Grey as a menace to the peace of Europe and his policy as a misfortune to our country. What is the explanation?

Great Britain in Europe can pursue one of two policies. It can keep on terms of general friendship with the European nations, treating with each separately when necessary and cooperating with all on matters of common interest. To do this effectively it has to keep its hands clean. It has to make its position clear, and its sympathy has to be boldly given to every movement for liberty. This is a policy which requires great faith, great patience, and great courage. Its foundations are being built by our own International, and if our Liberal Government had only followed it since 1905 it would by this time have smashed the military autocracies which have brought us into war.

But there is a more alluring policy—apparently easier, apparently safer, apparently more direct, but in reality more difficult, more dangerous, and less calculable. That is the policy of the balance of power through alliance. Weak and short-sighted ministers have always resorted to this because it is the policy of the instincts rather than of the reason. It formed groups of powers on the Continent. It divided Europe into two great hostile camps—Germany, Austria, and Italy on the one hand; Russia, France and ourselves on the other. The progeny of this policy is suspicion and armaments; its end is war and the smashing up of the very balance which it is designed to maintain. When war comes it is then bound to be universal. Every nation is on one rope or another, and when one slips it drags its allies with it.

As a matter of practical experience the very worst form of alliance is the *entente*. An alliance is definite. Every one knows his responsibilities under it. The *entente* deceives the people. When Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey kept assuring the House of Commons that we had contracted no obligations by our *entente* with France they said what was literally true but substantially untrue. That is why stupid or dishonest statesmen prefer the *entente* to the alliance; it permits them to see hard facts through a veil of sentimental vagueness. Had we had a definite

alliance with France and Russia the only difference would have been that we and everybody else should have known what we had let ourselves in for, and that might have averted the war. Italy could keep out of the turmoil because its membership in the alliance imposed only definite obligations upon it; we were dragged in because our *entente* involved us in an indefinite maze of honorable commitments.

It is interesting to gather from Sir Edward Grey's speech of August 3 and the White Paper how completely the *entente* entangled him. There were first of all the "conversations" between French and British naval and army experts from 1906 onward. These produced plans of naval and military operations which France and we were to take jointly together. It was in accordance with these schemes that the northern coasts of France were left unprotected by the French navy. *When Sir Edward Grey evoked our sympathy on the ground that the French northern coasts were unprotected, he did not tell us that he had agreed that they should be unprotected and that the French fleet should be concentrated in the Mediterranean.*

These "conversations" were carried on for about six years without the knowledge or consent of the Cabinet. The military plans were sent to St. Petersburg, and a Grand Duke (so well-informed authorities say) connected with the German party in Russia sent them to Berlin. Germany has known for years that there were military arrangements between France and ourselves, and that Russia would fit her operations into these plans.

We had so mixed ourselves up in the Franco-Russian alliance that Sir Edward Grey had to tell us on August 3 that though our hands were free our honor was pledged!

The country had been so helplessly committed to fight for France and Russia that Sir Edward Grey had to refuse point blank every overture made by Germany to keep us out of the conflict. That is why, when reporting the negotiations to the House of Commons, he found it impossible to tell the whole truth and to put impartially what he chose to tell us. He scoffed at the German guarantee to Belgium on the ground that it only secured the "integrity" of the country but not its independence; when the actual documents appeared it was found that its independence was secured as well. And that is not the worst. *The White Paper contains several offers which were made to us by Germany aimed at securing our neutrality. None were quite satisfactory in their form and Sir Edward Grey left the impression that these unsatisfactory proposals were all that Germany made. Later on the Prime Minister did the same. Both withheld the full truth from us. The German ambassador saw Sir Edward Grey, according to the White Paper, on August 1—and this is our foreign minister's note of the conversation:*

"The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions upon which we could remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed."

Sir Edward Grey declined to consider neutrality on any conditions and refrained from reporting this conversation to the House. Why? It was the most important proposal that Germany made. Had this been told us by Sir Edward Grey his speech could not have worked up a war sentiment. The hard, immovable fact is that Sir Edward Grey had so pledged the country's honor without the country's knowledge to fight for France or Russia, that he was not in a position even to discuss neutrality. That was the state of affairs on July 20 and did not arise from anything Germany did or did not do after that date.

Now, the apparent contradiction that the man who had worked for European peace was at the same time the leader of the war party in the Cabinet can be explained. Sir Edward Grey strove to undo the result of his policy and keep Europe at peace but, when he failed, he found himself committed to dragging his country into war.

The justifications offered are nothing but the excuses which ministers can always produce for mistakes. Let me take the case of Belgium. *It has been known for years that, in the event of a war between Russia and France on the one hand and Germany on the other, the only possible military tactics for Germany to pursue were to attack France hot foot through Belgium, and then return to meet the Russians. The plans were in our war office. They were discussed quite openly during the Agadir trouble, and were the subject of some magazine articles, particularly one by Mr. Belloc.*

Mr. Gladstone made it clear in 1870 that in a general conflict formal neutrality might be violated. He said in the House of Commons in August, 1870: "I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to an assertion that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it, irrespective altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises."

Germany's guarantees to Belgium would have been accepted by Mr. Gladstone. If France had decided to attack Germany through Belgium Sir Edward Grey would not have objected, but would have justified himself by Mr. Gladstone's opinions.

We knew Germany's military plans. We obtained them through the usual channels of spies and secret service. We knew that the road through Belgium was an essential part of them. That was our opportunity to find a "disinterested" motive apart from the obligations of the entente. It is well known that a nation will not fight except for a cause in which idealism is mingled. The Daily Mail supplied the idealism for the South African war by telling lies about the flogging of British women and children; our government supplied the idealism for this war by telling us that the independence of Belgium had to be vindicated by us. Before it addressed its inquiries to France and Germany upon this point, knowing the military exigencies of both countries,

it knew that France could reply suitably whilst Germany could not do so. *It was a pretty little game in hypocrisy which the magnificent valor of the Belgians will enable the government to hide up for the time being.*

Such are the facts of the case. It is a diplomatist's war, made by about half-a-dozen men. Up to the moment that ambassadors were withdrawn the peoples were at peace. They had no quarrel with each other; they bore each other no ill-will. Half-a-dozen men brought Europe to the brink of a precipice and Europe fell over it because it could not help itself. To-day our happy industrial prospects of a fortnight ago are darkened. Suffering has come to be with us. Ruin stares many of us in the face. Little comfortable businesses are wrecked, tiny incomes have vanished. Want is in our midst, and Death walks with Want. *And when we sit down and ask ourselves with fulness of knowledge: "Why has this evil happened?" the only answer we can give is, because Sir Edward Grey has guided our foreign policy during the past eight years.* His short-sightedness and his blunders have brought all this upon us.

I have been reminded of one of those somber judgments which the prophet who lived in evil times uttered against Israel. "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

Aye, what will ye do in the end thereof?

Is Germany Right and Britain Wrong?

FROM A SPEECH BY CLIFFORD ALLEN

(The parts omitted are such as have no direct bearing on the war issues.—Ed.)

The international spirit must lead us to prevent the annihilation and dismemberment of Germany, should she be beaten. Her spirit of splendid vigor has produced the sternest philosophy, the most virile art, the most scornful literature, and some of the greatest scientific discoveries of the world. (By the way, I know nothing more amusing than the way in which the average journalist is to-day claiming a knowledge and long-time understanding of Nietzsche almost as complete as the Kaiser's intimacy with the Almighty.)

This great national spirit must be preserved for Germany whatever she may suffer in her quite natural but second-hand imperial ambitions. Her remarkable organizing ability must be used for its rightful purpose. We Socialists must sit at her feet and learn the lesson of discipline and constancy.

The great International may lie in the dust, but its spirit will revive, and Germany's national spirit be saved.

ATROCITIES

Foul slanders are circulating. Tales of atrocities—always German—are on our lips. Let us beware; let us reserve judgment so that we may never pass sentence. Our passions are being stirred, but not our sense of shame! The destruction of Rheims evoked a louder cry of horror than the destruction of tens of thousands of our sons on the field of battle.

Mr. Chairman, war itself is an atrocity, and are we to stand surprised at its natural consequences? In the name of religion, men and women have been thrown to the lions, in the name of modern commerce the Belgians have torn the limbs of Congo natives; if you let loose the dogs of war, you must take the consequences. If you are going to be brutish, be brutish thoroughly, you can't play at being soldiers. Listen to the capitalist asking in each country for the war to be conducted humanely! Are there no atrocities in times of peace for which he is responsible? Is it not a far more terrible thing to see a little child starve in times of plenty than even to witness the natural excesses of war?

We must refuse to be surprised by war being conducted as war, not like a game of skittles. But above all, when the time of reckoning comes, let us see to it that those good capitalists and their wives in their West End drawing-rooms, who hold up their hands with such horror now, shall not be allowed to forget, nay, rather shall be forced to remember, the eternal shame and atrocity upon which their very lives are built and maintained.

So much for the past.

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GERMAN AGGRESSION

Let us now devote our minds to the most plausible argument that has swayed men's minds in this matter.

Is Germany the Aggressor?

This seems to be the one question which is burdening not only the minds of the unthinking, who are convinced because they do not think, but is even exercising the conscience of the Socialist. Practically all the Labor members who are recruiting, and other Socialists—not to speak of the general public—answer this question in the affirmative.

Now the first point that comes naturally to our minds is this:—The argument of German aggression is used not so much by Socialists as by our capitalist government itself and by the men and women who believe in that Government. With this very important fact in mind, assume that Germany is the Aggressor. Is then England to cast the first stone? Look at the map and note how much of it is painted red. (They always paint the British Empire red; I suppose to recall the blood that has been shed in building it.) Does your survey ease your conscience? Read the speeches of the members of the Navy League. Do you ever sing "Rule Britannia"? I hope not. Then ask if our country, which lays so much emphasis on Germany's aggression, can boast in this matter.

Bernhardi is only saying what Lord Roberts and leaders of English thought and the builders of our Empire have been saying much more clumsily but successfully for years.

Can France, our ally, cast a stone? Have you ever heard of Napoleon, whose end was wrought by the Prussians and ourselves in alliance?

Consider, then, the utter folly of capitalist Britain condemning the aggression of Germany after it and France—the two great colonial empires—have "cornered" the world.

But take the argument a step farther and suppose two or three blacks do not make a white:—let us examine the question of Germany's aggressiveness upon its own merits, and see if it is justified.

Remember, we Socialists are not dominating British life any more than Socialists are dominating German life, and we cannot, therefore,

support a capitalist government in Britain in order to condemn a capitalist government in Germany. That means we must first see if the non-Socialist can be justified in his opinion.

GERMANY'S GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION

As a lover of your country, look at the map for a moment. As a believer in and a lover of your own country and her national safety, try and visualize your national sentiments as a German. Don't think of the aggressiveness of Britain, strong in her island fortress, think of Germany's geographical position. *We are isolated. Is that true of Germany? She occupies the most unfortunate geographical position in Europe, encircled on all sides by great nations, and with an almost land-locked seaboard, which must be well guarded or it might be closed and her encircling complete.*

Assuming the ordinary ideas which govern our country, would you not justify Germany at least in defending herself? I think you will assent to that.

But apart from a mere necessary defense of her national safety, owing to her geographical position, examine the bearing of European policy upon her. Try and view the matter dispassionately for a moment.

GERMANY'S POLITICAL POSITION

Germany must secure one safe frontier and she must find some ally. To which country in many respects is she most closely allied by race and position?—to Austria. She allies to her. Is there anything unusually wicked about alliances—at least viewed from the standpoint of accepted diplomacy? *But why with Austria? Have you ever heard of Russia?—She is our ally!* Russia, the great overpowering, sinister, tyrannous, ever-growing Russia. Russia, the vanguard of the ever westward trend of races. Russia, with her theory of Pan-Slavism, sweeping on to the westward, bringing the Balkans northwest with her. Does not that justify some alliance and the keenest possible defence by Germany? Should we not defend ourselves if Russia was our immediate neighbor?

But more than this. France on the other side. France, which under Napoleon had stampeded through Europe, and brought the Franco-Prussian War upon herself by a generation of restlessness. Think of Germany's position. The menace of Russia and Pan-Slavism on the one side and a revengeful France, Russia's ally, on the other. *Would you not call Germany mad if she was not well defended?*

But something more! Britain's shadow clouds the background, pursuing a foreign policy which threw Europe eventually into war, because it was shrouded in uncertainty. Men are more afraid of uncertainty than of certainty and a thief with a bludgeon.

Mr. Chairman, can you wonder at least at Germany's defence?

But once admit that and you will have to face a still stronger case for Germany. Surely the defence of a man, surrounded, is often possible only if it becomes aggressive. A man with his back to the wall has sometimes to break out upon his foes.

Assuming the theories which govern all nations, including our own, Germany's bounden—indeed only—duty was to make herself feared. All defensive tactics were useless to her if not aggressive.

GERMANY THE NEW NATION

I have spoken to you already of the splendor and vigor of Germany's culture, art, philosophy, literature and science, which some people say has ceased since militarism took root. Germany is a nation of vigor and strength, she is a new nation, she is a growing nation; and such a nation (we were thus once—we are now a comfortable world-empire) needs to stretch its limbs. Do we want to crush new national vigor whenever it appears in the world's history?

What did this young nation find? Herself surrounded on all sides. Her expansion forbidden. What has been the result of the foreign policy of our capitalist rulers? It is we who have forced all this German vigor into the wrong channels. People say Germany's whole military make-up is aggressive. That may be true,—it should be true. Passive defence is no good to her. So jeopardized is her national safety that she must stir the spirit and intention of her people to endure—no, to rejoice in military preparedness. Defence to her must be interpreted in terms of aggression, and such justifiable aggressiveness inevitably results in bombastic aggressiveness. She must plan to attack in order to defend. Bernhardt pleads with his country, as well as interprets her need and spirit.

A nation's history and geographical position create her philosophy, literature and temperament. Germany's natural vigor has already produced a great literature and science. It is also, quite truly, marred by bombast, for we, with our capitalist and commercial views, have helped to force her vigor into the military channel. Remember that there is a military caste in every nation, but it can only secure a position of predominance if it is provided with the right kind of geographical and political environment. We have helped to give it its chance in Germany. *We have branded her whole national life with a military spirit; her only defence was one of aggressive preparation—and where better could she learn that spirit than from the Empire upon which the sun never sets?* Can you wonder at the foolish bombast of a nation—so vigorous and yet so surrounded, geographically and politically?

Such was Germany's position at home, but she has had yet more difficulties. Her chances of imperial expansion were infinitely worse.

Her population was growing, her commerce spreading, and yet she had no place in the world for expansion.

Again the Capitalist conception of property and society are responsible. It has so ordered the world that it is not elastic; there is no room for change; all the best of the world is appropriated, and, being capitalists, we stick to our property.

Let me quote a passage from the Prime Minister's speech delivered a few days ago in Cardiff. What does he say—

"We do not covet any people's territory, we have no desire to impose our rule upon alien populations. The British Empire is enough for us (Laughter and cheers)"—(*It is too much for growing Germany*)—"All that we wished for, all that we wish for now, is to be allowed peaceably to consolidate our own resources, to raise within the Empire the level of common opportunity to draw closer the bond of affection and confidence between its parts, and to make it everywhere the worthy home of the best traditions of British liberty. (Cheers.)

"Does it not follow from that that nowhere in the world is there a people who have stronger motives to avoid war and to seek and insure peace?" (Cheers.)

What does all that mean? Simply this. We are first in; we have "cornered" the world. It is the old capitalist philosophy to which I referred a few moments ago. Property. We are in possession, therefore we believe in the *status quo*. "No change, because no advantage for us."

Empires may be foolish and wrong, but they exist, and should we then cast the first stone?

Capitalist policy only allows the world to change by the snapping of the elastic. Can you wonder now at Germany's defence? Can you wonder at the spirit of those who dominate her life? They are the natural products of the strength and the vigor which might have produced the world's greatest civilization, had it not been perverted by our capitalist policy.

Have Socialists, who support the war, or the general public, thought this matter out carefully? *Have those who rejoice in the British Empire and cherish national safety ever placed themselves in the position of a German?*

And yet it was this supposed unjustifiable German aggressiveness which swayed our leaders to support the upholders of an even greater Empire, the product of a more gross aggressiveness.

* * * * *

It was then this question of the crushing of France that was at stake. Could we have saved this, and so prevented ourselves from being embroiled? Most certainly yes. When questioned by our Ambassador, the German Chancellor offered the integrity of France and the safety of her shores as the price of our neutrality. But we would not agree because of the supposed infamy incurred, if French colonial integrity

was not guaranteed. But wherein lay the infamy if the real questions of interest at stake were French European integrity and Belgian neutrality? If we are to believe that we were not bound to her by a definite alliance, France's colonial Empire was her own lookout. Whatever could be said for the judicious combination by Britain of her interests and her duty in the matter of French integrity, that could not apply to the integrity of her colonies. Their seizure by Germany constituted no real danger to us, unless you assume that any alteration in the apportioning of the world, already made, menaced the British Empire. If you admit that, then you admit my first argument in defence of Germany's aggressiveness, that there was no way for this new nation to expand, except by force. The world was, in fact, "pegged" out.

Yes, you reply, but could we accept Germany's word in the matter of French national integrity with the Belgian scandal in mind? Just a moment. The supposed infamy of deserting French colonies has no relation to the breach of faith in Belgium.

And are we right in distrusting Germany's word in the quite distinct question of French home integrity? You, of course, know of Germany's reference to her knowledge of unimpeachable authority of France's intention to violate Belgian neutrality. You may reject that, but why should we trust the word of capitalist France and reject the word of capitalist Germany?

Surely there can be no two opinions. Firstly, that we have gone to war in our own interests and that France, being the great consideration, the subsequent neutrality of Belgium, important as it was, was only the peg upon which we hung our linen. Secondly, that it was not only the questions of French integrity and of our safety that plunged us into war, but equally, the question of Colonial expansion, for France's European integrity could have been admittedly secured by our neutrality.

BELGIUM'S NEUTRALITY

The fact of the matter is, that our diplomatists were determined that we should join in this war, because they would not admit the right of Germany to develop in any direction.

I think, then, we can agree that we did not go to war over Belgian neutrality, though this has been put forward as the factor that has made our cause a righteous one. Are we to consider it seriously?

Firstly, let me remind you again that Germany has sworn that she had it on the most unimpeachable authority that France also intended to ask for right of way through Belgium. Both countries desired to avoid forcing a passage through each other's fortified frontiers. I sometimes wonder if this supposed knowledge by Germany prompted the ultimatum forty-eight hours after a renewed affirmation of Belgium neutrality.

More than this. Three years ago, it is admitted that we knew of Germany's preparations toward Belgium. Had we then publicly de-

clared that we should take the field against that country—Germany or France—which eventually might break the Belgian Treaty, we could have saved Belgium. By being involved in the Triple *Entente*, instead of the unpledged upholders of international morality, we have forced the violation of Belgian neutrality instead of saving it.

Secondly, who are we that we should pose as the respecter of treaties? Have we not branded on our souls the grim lesson of Russian atrocities in Persia—(worse than any of the supposed German atrocities in Belgium)—after we had guaranteed through our counsel the independence and integrity of that country?

After all, the foul deeds that have been done in Belgium, if we may accept all we hear, are the results of the passions of war. This cannot be said of Russia, the defender of small Serbia and the torturer of Persia. We stood by on that occasion. I have seen photographs of the mangled disembowelled bodies of Persians as they hung head downward in the public streets. We, the guarantors of Persian liberties, stood by on that occasion. Our duty then was not our interest.

Has our occupation of Egypt nothing to teach us in this matter? Did we go to war because of the violation of the neutrality of Luxembourg, which was guaranteed, every bit as strongly as that of Belgium? No, it did not affect our interest so closely. I can understand the point of view of the man who will boldly argue that we went to war in our own interest, and show him how inevitable we had made that by our theory of the Balance of Power. But I cannot argue with the man who, believing in British interest, pretends only to remember our righteousness in this case, irrespective of our past dishonor.

But let me emphasize one other point regarding this Belgian business. Remember, that Belgium was armed to the teeth. There is only one end to a neutral or any other country which is armed, the demand that those arms should be used.

Let us venture further into this matter of neutrality and the high morality of nations.

There are few nations that I know of at whose door cannot be laid broken treaties. All nations with their grabbing of the world, and their capitalist domination over weaker nations, can be likened to a set of thieves. And this keeping of treaties is only asking for honor among thieves. Treaties are made between strong nations and weak nations, between old and new nations, and conditions change. As the world moves on it is essential that the resorting of nations should make them stretch at the treaties made when their conditions were different.

Germany realized—and I think she was right from a strategical point of view—that her safety as a nation was seriously menaced by this neutrality of Belgium, and she realized that her safety demanded that it should come to an end. Look for a moment at the military necessity placed upon her by the encircling of the Allies, that we have already discussed.

She was surrounded by countries with many more millions at their disposal than herself, with the strategical Russian railways nearing completion, and she was menaced by isolation by the British Navy. She had to face all this, to meet all these nations and beat them in turn before they could combine.

Her Chancellor was right when he stated that upon rapidity of action depended Germany's very life. She must rush through to Paris, and then return to crush the Russian hordes before she was starved out or steam-rollered. I cannot help but think that there is something rather splendid about the bold frank statement of the German Chancellor in the Reichstag—

"Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxembourg and perhaps are already on Belgian soil. Gentlemen, that is contrary to the dictates of international law. . . . The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavor to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened, as we are threatened, and is fighting for his highest possessions has only one thought—how he is to hack his way through."

Is it not refreshing to read these words after the cant of the British Empire with its stained honor and its clever confusion of its interest and its duty? Let those who cherish Britain's national safety ponder a little over those splendid frank words of the German Chancellor.

Belgium alone could save the German nation, and you who love your country, consider for a moment what that demands from any nation. Assuming that all nations are moral, which we know they are not, assume that no nation has or would ever break a treaty, which we know they all will and have (when interest demands it), what could Germany do to save her life? Give notice years ago to the world that she intended, in the event of war, to pass through Belgium, in view of the change in the world since the treaty was made. Had she done so before her military forces were sufficiently prepared to meet the enormous strength against her or the Kiel Canal completed, she would have been mad. If so circumstanced the British nation would have had too much sense to allow their Government the privilege of morality. To announce withdrawal from that treaty, even though confirmed a few years ago, would have been equivalent to bringing the whole of Europe about her ears before she was prepared to protect herself.

The German nation has for years been in jeopardy and was bound to be involved in war, possibly on this very question.

You are probably wearied to death by the famous statement respecting treaties uttered by Mr. Gladstone, but for all that, it is worth while quoting again:—

"I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to an assertion that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it, irrespective altogether of the particular position in which it will find itself when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises."

Does not this show that all Governments under similar circumstances take the same view?

I tell you we have forced the violation of Belgian neutrality by our policy; I tell you that we cannot pose as the upholders of the morality of nations; I tell you we are in this war for our own interest, and that that interest is dictated by the capitalist conception of society and imperialism that dominates those who rule us. It is geography that dictates the morality of nations.

The Outbreak of the War

By E. D. MOREL

Being a letter to the Executive of the Birkenhead Liberal Association which appeared in the *Birkenhead News* and in the *Birkenhead Advertiser* of October 14, 1914.

Cherry Croft,
King's Langley (Herts),
October 5th, 1914.

I would wish to preface my remarks on the wider issue by saying that I detest as heartily as any one can do the odious and immoral doctrines preached by the politico-militarist school of Prussia, and inculcated by the philosophy of Nietzsche and Treitschke which have contributed, exactly to what degree it is difficult to say, but largely there can be no doubt, to the armed tension of Europe; that I condemn as vigorously as any one can do the blundering brutality of German diplomatic methods; that I abhor as intensely as any one can do the violation of Belgian territory and the ruthless treatment meted out to the Belgian civilian population and to certain Belgian towns by the German armies. Were every counter allegation, precedently and subsequently brought against the Belgian civil population by Germany, true, it would not lessen Germany's responsibility one iota. Nor is Germany's moral responsibility by one fraction lowered because the Russian troops are alleged to be perpetrating wholesale excesses in East Prussia. These monstrosities are the accompaniment of all wars. Perpetrated in Belgium, they reach to a high pinnacle of shame because Belgian neutrality was guaranteed by international treaty, above all because Belgium was innocent of any provocative act whatever;¹ and I am wholly in accord with the view that future conditions of peace

¹ This was written October 5, 1914. It was not till later that incontestable proof of Belgium's secret military understanding with England was made known through the publication of evidence discovered in the war archives at Brussels. Lord Haldane, speaking in London in April, 1915, after a war lecture by Sir A. C. Doyle, admitted publicly that "the time came when the enemy met a British army, the commander-in-chief of which, to his intimate personal knowledge, had been studying the possibilities of this position five years before it occurred. They all hoped it would not be necessary to send an expeditionary force to the Continent, but Sir John French's chief interest, as commander of the force, was the problem he would have to face, and he had given the closest study of his life to it." (*New York Evening Post*, April 21, 1915.) In other words, Sir John French five years before the war, had studied the position the English troops would take in Belgium when the war with Germany should come.—Ed.

should include heavy compensation to Belgium for the material damage inflicted upon her and for the wrongs which she has suffered. I favor this the more since, as I shall presently show, I believe that the British Government is also heavily in Belgium's debt: a debt which the issue of loans and hospitality to refugees do not liquidate.

These sentiments, however, cannot blind me to the facts that Germany is not peculiar in possessing a politico-militarist school whose influence is pestilential; that we heard of Machiavelli before we heard of Nietzsche; that a German Association comprising some 300 of the intellectual élite of Germany published last year a scathing onslaught upon Bernhardi, who himself complains in his preface that his book is necessary because his views are not shared by the mass of his countrymen; that the sanctity of international law has been flouted by every Government in turn whenever it considered its vital interests affected; that the last decade alone has witnessed a perfect epidemic of Treaty breaking, and finally, that despite its bragging and saber-rattling, its offensive diplomatic procedure and the unpleasant claim of its ruler to copartnership with the Almighty, *Germany is, in point of fact, the only great European Power which during the last forty years has not indulged in the pastime of war, apart from the guerilla campaign against a Hottentot tribe in Southwest Africa.* I conclude from this that neither the German people, nor yet their Government, have a monopoly of immorality, treachery, violence, and general wickedness; that to encourage the state of mind which fosters this notion is to render a disservice and not a service to our people, between whom and the German people, I, for my part, deem it not unpatriotic to hope for reconciliation and cooperation in happier days; is to impair the judgment and distort the vision of our people who require no such stimulus to do their duty whatever it may be; and is to excite a temper calculated to encourage a repetition of the errors and a perpetuation of the systems which have occasioned this cataclysm. Nor do I believe that militarism, Prussian or other, can be destroyed by militarism; or that particular constitutions can be imposed upon a people from outside; or that the idea that a nation of eighty millions can be dismembered and reduced to a position of permanent political inferiority is other than a delusion. I should not find it possible to support a policy which proclaimed these aims to be its own and which was unprepared, after the defeat of the enemy and after the fear of invasion had passed away, to sacrifice innumerable lives in the attempt to secure them. If these opinions conflict with true Liberalism, then it is evident that I have, somehow, missed what I conceived the spirit of Liberalism to be.

NATIONAL OBLIGATION TO FOREIGN POWERS

The real point of divergence between us, I gather, is concerned rather with the past than with the future. It is a matter of sincere

grief to me that divergence should exist on what I regard as a matter of principle and one of immense import to the democracy of this country. On this point I must be forgiven for speaking quite plainly. I hold that no Government, certainly no Liberal Government, is entitled to undertake obligations toward foreign Powers involving the use, in certain contingencies, of the armed forces of the Crown, without consulting Parliament. And I submit that when a Government, be it Liberal or Conservative, having contracted such liabilities without consulting Parliament, repeatedly states in Parliament that it has not done so, and only confesses that it has on the very eve of war, a situation arises whose implications are really fundamental, because they go to the very root of our public life and of our national institutions. It is a situation which is not affected by the necessity of vigorously prosecuting a war once entered upon—on that all are agreed. Nor is it affected by the views which may be generally held as to the causes, the origin, or the expediency of this war; nor yet by the ultimate results which may ensue from the war. It is far simpler and more direct. I content myself with saying that I am unable to accommodate myself to that situation, and on no consideration whatever could I remain silent on such an issue.

I may, perhaps, be allowed to recall to you that my opinions as to the injustice and danger to the democracy of an autocratic and secret foreign policy have never been concealed from the Birkenhead electorate. I have frequently adverted to the subject in my speeches, and I have never had reason to suppose that my statements were disapproved by my audiences, or that they were incompatible with that general exposition of Liberal principles by me to which you are good enough to make generous allusion in your letter. My public attitude on that grave and urgent problem had, moreover, preceded my adoption as prospective Liberal candidate for Birkenhead. My public contributions to the secret transactions between the British and French Foreign Departments which had characterized the Moroccan imbroglio were known in Birkenhead before my adoption, and my views on the whole subject of secret diplomacy had been stated beyond possibility of misconception.

THE DENIALS

Now, despite the belief, confirmed by official utterances, that the era of secret engagements toward France had finally disappeared with the French acquisition of Morocco, rumors arose last year, and again in the opening months of this year, that our Foreign Office had secretly committed us to render assistance to France in the event of a European War. As France was herself committed to Russia, this, if true, implied the additional and equally grave objection that our Foreign Policy would thereby become influenced by that of Russia, toward which Power the Foreign Policy of France had become manifestly subservient. The

prospect was the more alarming in view of what had happened and was happening in Persia. Rumor did not point to the conclusion of a Treaty; but, as one of the several questions put to the Prime Minister defined it, to the giving of:

. . . . assurances which in the contingency of a great European War would involve heavy military obligations on this country . . . an obligation arising owing to an assurance given by the Ministry in the course of diplomatic negotiations, to send a very large armed force out of this country to operate in Europe.

These questions will be found in Hansard, 1913, vol. l., cols. 42-43; vol. l., cols. 1316-7; 1914, vol. lxi., col. 1499; vol. lxiii., cols. 457-8. The replies were categorical. On March 11th, 1913, the Prime Minister denied that such obligations had been contracted or such assurances given. A fortnight later the Prime Minister repeated the denial in detail. On April 28th of this year the Foreign Secretary declared that the position had not altered. On June 11th he assured the House that the Prime Minister's statement "remains as true to-day as it was a year ago." These definite affirmations, although treated scoffingly enough in a great Tory newspaper, assumed, not without presumptive evidence, to be in the closest touch with certain influential permanent officials in the Foreign Office, seemed to dispose once and for all of the truth of the rumors in question to which I had personally lent credence.

THE AVOWALS

On August 3rd last, when the tramp of armed legions had begun to shake the plains of Europe, *the Foreign Secretary revealed to the House of Commons, amid shouts of approval from the Tory benches, that he had contracted liabilities toward France as far back as 1906; that they had been renewed on divers occasions since, and that the final seal had been placed upon them on the previous day, August 2nd. These liabilities had taken the form of (a) authorizing a plan of military operations on the Continent of Europe between the British and French General Staffs, (b) authorizing an arrangement between the Admiralty and the French Naval Authorities involving a strategic disposition of the French Fleet favorably affecting our naval position in the Mediterranean, but leaving the French northern and western coastline undefended, (c) undertaking to attack the German Fleet if the German Fleet made a descent upon the French coasts or interfered with French shipping.*

It came, therefore, to this. While negative assurances were given to the House of Commons, positive acts diametrically opposed to these assurances had been concerted by the War Office and the Admiralty with the authority of the Foreign Office. All the obligations of an open alliance had been incurred, but incurred by the most dangerous and subtle of methods; incurred in such a way as to leave the Cabinet

free to deny the existence of any formal parchment recording them, and free to represent its policy at home and abroad as one of contractual detachment from the rival Continental groups. When, in the early days of August, the situation into which the Government as a whole had drifted, became for the first time clearly apparent to the Cabinet, two of its members found themselves unable to concur in what they regarded as a breach of faith to themselves and to the nation. Their standpoint, in a very differing degree of setting and circumstance, is my own. To-morrow it will, I venture to predict, be the standpoint of the Democracy of this country. For while the policy of contracting obligations of this kind toward Continental Powers may or may not be wise, a system which allows of so terrific a responsibility being assumed by a section of the Cabinet behind the back of Parliament is not a system which Democracy can tolerate with safety to itself. And a system which permits of responsible Ministers rising in Parliament to deny that which has been planned, prepared, and executed is not a system to which I, as a believer in the principle of government by the people for the people, can give my allegiance. The overwhelming significance of the avowals of August 3rd are to-day obscured amidst the passions aroused by the war. But they constitute a challenge to the basic principles of popular government, and Democracy cannot remain indifferent to that challenge. It must take it up. If Liberalism is not behind it when it does so, Liberalism will disappear from our political life.

BRITAIN, FRANCE AND RUSSIA

It is possible that public opinion would have supported a case for a military and naval understanding with France, frankly placed before Parliament, on the basis of a Ministerial survey of the international situation. But in my judgment it is quite certain that the support would have been limited to sanctioning the defence of France if wantonly attacked by Germany *on an issue affecting those two countries alone*. There would have been a refusal to sanction the extension of our liabilities to contingencies arising out of France's relations with Russia, the one Power which had nothing to lose and everything to gain from a general European War. In that way would the European situation, so far as the Western Powers were concerned, have been saved. A really Liberal Foreign Policy, untrammelled by secret obligations, would have bent all its energies during the years which followed the Moroccan crisis of 1911, in an effort to secure that the impending clash (the portents were writ large upon the horizon) between Slav and Teuton in the Balkans should not fling Western Europe into the abyss. Our Foreign Policy was not free to take that course. It has been fettered by a naval and military understanding which bound us to the side, not of France alone, but to that of Russia, whose general mobilization order of July 31st was the precipitating

cause of the war. These fetters they were which effectually strangled the Foreign Secretary's strenuous efforts to preserve the peace of Europe during the crisis. He was tied to France, and through France to Russia. France is at war because of her contract with Russia. We, who deem ourselves at war because of the outrage upon Belgium, are at war for precisely the same reason as the French.

The one good thing which might have evolved from the evil thing which our entanglement itself was, would have been a frank avowal of its existence in the early days of the crisis. One of the most pregnant passages in the White Book is that in which the Russian Foreign Minister holds this language to our Ambassador:

"He (M. Sazanoff) did not believe that Germany really wanted war, but her attitude was decided by ours. If we took our stand firmly with France and Russia there would be no war. If we failed them now, rivers of blood would flow, and we would in the end be dragged into war." (No. 17.)

The Minister added, in reply to a remark by our Ambassador, that:

"unfortunately Germany was convinced that she could count upon our neutrality."

THE BELGIAN QUESTION

The fact that we had sacrificed our neutrality in advance by commitments secret and unsanctioned, but involving the honor of individual Ministers, was the fatal handicap to a serious attempt to deal with the Belgian issue, both in the years which preceded and in the opening days of the crisis. This, and this alone, is the explanation of the extraordinary manner in which the Belgian issue was handled. What was the position of Belgium in the event of a European conflagration involving the Western Powers? It was a position of extreme precariousness despite the international neutrality guarantee of 1839, renewed in 1870 for one year only. It was a position which the actual division of Europe into two rival groups rendered, indeed, almost desperate. For nothing was more certain than that if the embers, which these rivalries promoted, ever burst forth into stupendous fire, treaties and conventions, along with constitutions, frontiers, and even dynasties would be swallowed up in the flames. That, were this conflagration to eventuate, it would be on the Belgian plains that the future destinies of Europe would be decided, was the view of every strategist of repute in every country. It is noteworthy, however, that the experts have always omitted from their calculations the counterbalancing effect of a timely and explicit declaration of British policy. Experts upon international military strategy are not concerned with the moralities, but with the manner in which the great killing machines which Democracy tolerates and feeds to its own undoing, will be set in motion when potentates and diplomatists fall out and the pressure of the war

captains becomes irresistible. And the experts were all but unanimous in concluding that *in the event of a general European War waged on the basis of the existing divisions in Europe—i.e., an Austro-German combination on the one side and a Franco-Russian combination on the other—Germany, to stand any chance of victory, must strike instantly at France, and could only hope to strike successfully by striking through Belgium owing to the impossibility of forcing the defences of the French frontier.* All this was notorious. Equally notorious was the fact that Germany was perfecting her military railways and making other strategic preparations on the Belgian frontier to be ready for the eventuality. The facts have been published again and again. Mr. Churchill told us on September 21st last (at Liverpool) that he had known them for three years, and, of course, he spoke for his colleagues; for those of them, at least, whose business it is to be informed on these matters.

The position of Belgium, then, was such as imperiously necessitated a clear and unambiguous attitude on the part of those responsible for directing the Foreign Policy of Great Britain. The mere existence of the old neutrality treaty was obviously insufficient to safeguard Belgium's position, since, as Mr. Churchill has told us, the Government was aware that Germany would thrust aside that treaty if, on the outbreak of a European War she were faced with a Russo-French combination, a combination which, in view of the experts, would insure her defeat unless she could disable France rapidly by an advance through Belgium.

Confronted with these circumstances it was a duty owed by the British Government to its own people, to Belgium, and to the world, to intimate in clear language to all whom it might concern its firm intention of using the whole might of the Empire against any Power whose strategic military exigencies might tempt its rulers, in the event of a general European War, to violate the neutrality of Belgium. It was the one influence which, had it been timely exercised—for example, at any moment within the last two years when our relations with Germany were recovering from the Moroccan trouble—could have prevented the situation on the Belgian-German frontier from developing to the danger-point. There are precedents for such warnings conveyed in friendly terms in time of peace. If the warning had been disregarded and German preparations on the Belgian frontier had persisted, our course was clear. If it had been regarded we should have had an admirable opportunity of removing from Germany—under circumstances permitting of the practicability of the course, not at a moment when an acute crisis had reached breaking point—the latent fear that England might encourage a Russo-French aggression upon her; and thus played the disinterested rôle of Peace-maker among the nations. Even if such a declaration had been made in the opening days of the crisis it might still have had a potent effect,

because Germany believed at that moment that we should remain neutral.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE PREPARED FOR WAR.

But such an attitude was only possible to a Foreign Policy which, apart from the Belgian issue, was unfettered by commitments to either European group; or to a Foreign Policy which had sought and received national sanction to an alliance with France, but an alliance limited to the defence of legitimate French interests, an alliance unaffected by Russian aims and actions in the Balkans, an alliance designed to save France from being sacrificed to a Slav-Teuton quarrel, and in saving France, saving Belgium, and confining the theater of potential war to Eastern and Central Europe.

Such an attitude, unhappily, was not possible, because our neutrality had been bartered away. Hence it came about that as on the general issue, so on the Belgian issue, we maintained a doubtful attitude until the position had become hopelessly compromised, and until the opportunity of saving Belgium was lost. Although, as Mr. Churchill had said, we had been aware of Belgium's peril for three years, a glance at the White Book will show that the Belgian question was never raised at all until July 31st last. On that day we asked Germany, whom for three years we had been aware would not respect Belgian neutrality in the event of a war with Russia and France, whether she would respect it! We asked France the same question, **although the French plan of campaign had been concerted with the British General Staff!** And even on that day—the day upon which war became irrevocable through the issue of a general mobilization order for all the Russian armies—the Belgium issue was not presented as a question of vital British national policy; it might not be a “decisive” but merely an “important” factor in determining our action. (No. 119.) A day later yet—August 1st—it was intimated that the British official attitude on the Belgian issue would depend upon “public feeling.” (No. 123.)

The blood of our gallant sons is poured out to-day as the immediate consequence of the outrage committed upon Belgium. But the time will come when the country will ask of those in authority this question: **“What did you do to prevent that outrage?”** For my part I put that question now, and I find the answer in an autocratic and secret foreign policy to which I have been consistently opposed, and which I intend to help in rooting out of our national life.

I believe I am doing a greater service to those who suffer from its effects and with whom I had hoped to be associated later on in the accomplishment of that purpose, by speaking now than by remaining silent, even at the price of forfeiting your and their good-will. I cannot play the hypocrite among you.

Dreadnoughts and Dividends: An Exposure of the Armament Ring

SPEECH OF MR. PHILIP SNOWDEN, M.P., ON NAVAL ESTIMATES, 1914

Mr. Snowden said: The First Lord of the Admiralty, as a Member of a Liberal Government, has presented to the House of Commons Navy Estimates asking for a vote of more than £51,000,000. I cannot enter into the feelings and the views of Radical Members who sit on this side, but I cannot imagine that they listened with any great measure of satisfaction to the speech of the First Lord yesterday in spite of those distinguishing qualities which have been described as lucidity and rhetoric. If they have any regard for the future of the party with which they are associated, I think they must regard with a considerable amount of dismay these Naval Estimates piling up by millions year by year, and perhaps at times they may be inclined to put to themselves the question whether the acquisition by the Liberal Party of the First Lord of the Admiralty has been a valuable asset to that party. *My view is that the First Lord of the Admiralty in the position which he occupies at present is a danger to the safety of the country and a menace to the peace of the world.*¹ I said that I do not intend to deal with his speech in any very great detail, but there are one or two outstanding features in that speech to which I do want to make some reference. The First Lord of the Admiralty said that in the program of ship construction which he has now submitted to the House he was adhering to the standard laid down two years ago. I doubt if there be in this House any two Members who would give the same interpretation of the standard to which our naval policy is supposed to conform at the present time.

The First Lord in his speech yesterday gave us not one standard, but a large number of standards. It is quite true that in 1912 he departed from what had hitherto been regarded as the standard—namely, the two-Power standard—and he substituted for it a standard which he described as sixteen to ten against the next strongest naval Power. No sooner had he laid down that standard than he began to

¹ July 13, 1912, there appeared in the *New York World* a London cable dispatch: "The First Lord of the Admiralty (Winston Churchill), according to his political confidants, will not take the offensive, but the Radicals fear he may seize any German provocation to plunge England into war. *He is said to be obsessed with a feeling of Britain's naval might and is delighted at a bare prospect of demonstrating that might at Germany's expense.*"—ED.

break it. At the time he laid that down nothing had been said about the intention of Canada to build three ships. No sooner had the First Lord announced that standard to the House than he appears to have gone round the Empire touting to the Dependencies and the Colonies to build ships and to present them to the Imperial Navy. We had the offer of Canada to add three ships, and there was no declaration from the First Lord in connection with those ships that they were to be taken into account in calculating the standard of sixteen to ten. Then when the Canadian offer was withdrawn, he made that an excuse for departing from the standard which a few months before he had laid down. With the 1912 revision of the German Navy Law of 1907, the First Lord has adopted a new program of two to one for additional German ships. That gives us this result, that in 1917 Germany would have fourteen, and Great Britain twenty-five. As a matter of fact there is set up a new and a higher standard. On the sixteen to ten standard our figure would be not twenty-five but just under twenty-three, and taking that figure of twenty-three we are building two ships in excess of the sixteen to ten standard.

CHURCHILL'S AMBITIOUS PLANS.

There was no reason at all, in my opinion, upon those figures to build a fifth ship last year, and if the program of this year is reduced from four to two we shall still be within the sixteen to ten standard. I do not want to go into the point, which other Members are better qualified than I am to raise, as to our superiority in ships and equipment below the "Dreadnought" class, but it is not only there we have superiority over the next strongest European Power, but also in the character and capacity of our "Dreadnoughts." Therefore, taking all those facts into consideration, I submit that the declaration set out in the challenge that the First Lord has departed from the standard that he laid down two years ago is completely substantiated. But yesterday we had, as I have said, a new policy and a new standard put before us. The Canadian ships, and ships which may be provided by other Colonies, are not to be counted in calculating the sixteen to ten standard. If there was one feature of the speech of the First Lord yesterday which I think was more regrettable than another, it was the provocative and patronizing tone in which he referred to Canada, and, in a lesser degree, to other Colonies. The First Lord of the Admiralty has visions of Imperial responsibilities, and of an Imperial Navy to meet them. He looks forward to a time when every Colony will have a naval base and dockyards for the building and equipment of vessels of the Imperial Fleet. In his vision the First Lord of the Admiralty sees a British "Dreadnought" on every wave of the four oceans, and aeroplanes are as thick as locusts were in Egypt. That, in all seriousness, is the policy submitted to this

House yesterday. In addition to that, we are to have an enormous increase in the Mediterranean squadron. Why should this be necessary? What is the menace in the Mediterranean? Against whom are we to increase our squadron there? It will be said, of course, against Italy, against Austria, against a combination of the two. We have an understanding with France. Is that to be of no advantage to us? I take it, from the speech of the noble Lord (Lord C. Beresford) this afternoon, that our alliance with France involves that we should do all the paying and bear all the sacrifice, while they should reap all the advantage. [An Hon. Member: "No."] Yes. What did the noble Lord say? He referred to the condition of our Regular Army, and to the shortage of numbers in the Territorial Force. What was to be the price that we, according to the noble Lord, were to pay for this understanding with France? That we were to send an Expeditionary Force to the Continent to the assistance of France, if it were necessary. I do not think I misrepresented the noble Lord. After the statement of the First Lord yesterday, there was no need for the noble Lord to put the question whether we are going to hand over to France the whole of our responsibilities in the Mediterranean, as the First Lord told us that the number of "Dreadnoughts" is to be considerably increased, in addition to there being a very large increase in ships of other classes. Therefore, this is the point of the noble Lord. I think it is a great assumption, certainly one that would not be indorsed by Members of the party with which I am associated, nor, I think I may say, by a large number of Members on this side of the House, that we are under any obligation to send an Expeditionary Force to the assistance of France in any circumstances. If that be part of the understanding with France, I think the conditions of the understanding will need to be revised. Now we are to have this Imperial Fleet, and we are to have a very large addition to the Mediterranean Fleet—an addition, mark you, the end of which no man can see. If we are to put all these vessels on the blue waters of the Mediterranean, how will Italy and Austria regard that action? We know that the result will be an increase in their shipbuilding, and, according to the statement of policy made by the First Lord yesterday, a further increase in our strength in the Mediterranean. Where is the process going to stop? An increase in our Fleet in the North Sea, an Imperial Fleet, a Mediterranean Fleet. If the House of Commons is going to indorse this policy, it is not a £51,000,000 Navy Budget that they will be discussing in half a dozen years, but a £100,000,000 Budget.

INCREASE IN NINE YEARS \$100,000,000 FOR NAVALISM.

It is the theory of the House of Commons, in regard to naval matters, that we do not vote continuous programs; we vote the money

only for the yearly program. But the First Lord of the Admiralty, in his speech yesterday, assumed over and over again that the House of Commons was committed to a policy which was going to run for a considerable number of years. We protest altogether against that. I warn Members of the House who disapprove of this new policy that in supporting this Vote they are, according to the First Lord of the Admiralty, indorsing the extensive departure that he foreshadowed yesterday. I submit that it is folly in the present circumstances of naval architecture, shall I say, or equipment, to build as we are doing. In my support in this connection I may quote the First Lord himself. Only last week, in answer to a question, he stated that in the last few years ships which had cost £26,000,000 had been scrapped. The authority I wish to quote is the statement of the First Lord himself two years ago:

"It is wrong and wasteful to build a single ship for the Navy which is not wanted. Nearly three years of her brief life have been lived before she is born. Before she is even launched the vessels which are capable of destroying her have been projected. It is an ill service to the Navy to build a single ship before its time."

The First Lord yesterday appeared to give some support to an opinion which, I believe, is rapidly gaining ground in naval circles, that the era of the "Dreadnought" is coming to an end, and that the development of submarines is likely to revolutionize the methods of naval warfare. In one of the weekly reviews a week or two ago there appeared a remarkable article upon this point, from which I would like to read two or three sentences. The apparently very well-informed writer said:

"I believe it to be the accepted doctrine in the best informed naval circles that as things are at present no battleship dare venture into waters in which submarines are known to be lurking. What does this mean? That in future battleships can only come into action in mid-ocean, in the center of the Atlantic or in the Southern seas—that in the next naval war the narrow seas around the British Isles, the Baltic, and the Mediterranean can be literally closed to battleships. Nor will the broad oceans be exempted from the closure for long. The new British submarines will be all but ocean-going ships. Their radius of action is 1,000 miles. They will have a surface speed of nearly twenty-two knots, and about sixteen submerged. They will carry a large armament of torpedoes and two quick-firing guns. Against these craft a battleship is absolutely defenceless unless she is lying at anchor with torpedo nets out. And at the present moment no one can see how she is to be defended."

I submit that, in view of the not only possible, but probable, development, it is, to use the words of the First Lord, madness and folly to go on incurring this expenditure which in a year or two may be absolutely useless. I now turn to the financial side of the question.

In speaking upon this matter I shall probably be entitled to receive a considerable amount of sympathy from Radicals on these benches, because if there was one thing more than another on which

this Government was returned to power in 1906, it was on a pledge of peace and retrenchment. When, in the later days of the previous Parliament, the present First Lord of the Admiralty was admirably combining in himself the two rôles of Tory Member for Oldham and Radical candidate for Manchester, his speeches were confined almost exclusively to attacks on the Tory Government for its gross extravagance, and on every election platform the right hon. gentleman was holding aloft the grand old Liberal flag of peace and retrenchment, especially retrenchment. He is now a Member of a Government which in nine years has increased the naval expenditure of the country *by about £20,000,000.*

ENGLAND'S NAVALISM SIMPLY STAGGERING.

The first year for which the present Government were responsible for the Estimates—1906-7—the naval expenditure stood at, roughly, £31,000,000. The House is now asked to vote £51,000,000. I want to put this question to Radical Members. If the statement had been made ten years ago that nine years of Liberal Government would add £20,000,000 to naval expenditure, is there a Radical Member or a Radical in the country who would not have said that the man who made such a statement was mad? I can well remember the time when a Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer resigned office rather than be responsible for providing £13,000,000 per year for naval expenditure. We now have the son of that Tory Minister, practically without apologizing to the House—nay, glorying in the magnitude of the Estimates—proposing, in the name of a Liberal Government, an expenditure of more than £51,000,000. During ten years of office Tory recklessness only raised the naval expenditure by £14,000,000. I do not know what they might do if the turn of the tide should bring them to power once more, but judging from the speech of the hon. member for Fareham yesterday and the speech of the noble Lord and gallant Admiral this afternoon, it would not be a Budget of £50,000,000 or £70,000,000, but one of £100,000,000 or more. I wish when responsible Members opposite speak on this question they would be a little more definite. For instance, I wish they would tell us what size of fleet in the North Sea would satisfy them. I wish they would say what size of fleet in the Mediterranean would enable them to sleep comfortable at night. I wish they would tell us what size of fleet they think necessary adequately to protect our great Imperial obligations. They leave us in the dark in these matters, and we can only conjecture. My conjecture is that in that day when the Hon. Member for Fareham combines in himself—as he is quite capable of doing—the joint office of First Lord of the Admiralty and Secretary of State for War we shall see a Budget for naval and military expenditure larger than the sum total of the Budget that the Chancellor of the

Exchequer will be submitting to this House in the course of a few weeks.

I remember Sir William Harcourt's great Budget of about twenty years ago. We looked to the additional revenue that was to accrue from that Budget as a means of financing long-delayed schemes of social reform. What happened? Not a penny of public advantage has come from the new taxes that were then levied. Four years ago we were fighting in defence of the Budget proposed by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. Why? We were fighting for this new taxation, not that it might be spent upon "Dreadnoughts"; not that it might go as increased profit into the pockets of armament firms. We supported the Budget because we believed that the additional revenue was going to be devoted to deal with problems of old age, poverty, unemployment, the education question, better housing, and the like. To sum up the whole question, the increase in naval expenditure has absorbed practically all the additional revenue which has come from the taxation imposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer some years ago. What about the First Lord of the Admiralty? Two years ago he assumed that the Budget had been devised and a General Election had been fought upon it; that a constitutional crisis had arisen, solely that additional money might be provided for him to spend in extending the Navy. What did the right hon. gentleman say?

"It is right for me to say that the great scale which our naval armaments have been forced to assume, has only been rendered possible by the wonderful fertility of the great budget of 1909, for which my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be long and variously remembered."

ENGLAND AND FRANCE SPEND MORE FOR MILITARISM THAN GERMANY.

There was something in the nature of prophecy in the selection of that word "variously." The increase in the sum spent upon the Navy, based on this year's Estimates, is practically equal to the sum this Government has spent upon social reform. The attention which the right hon. gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty gave to me just now reminds me that when I was speaking on this question two years ago I said that our party was not going to take "Dreadnoughts" as a substitute for social reform. I remember how heartily the right hon. gentleman applauded that statement. But that is what we are doing. What is the excuse always put forward when we want money for some social reform? It is that the expenditure of the nation is so high that more money cannot be provided. If it had not been for this £20,000,000 increase of naval expenditure, what could we not have done? This Government during its ten years of office has spent £360,000,000 upon the Navy. With half of that sum we could have established a Utopia in this dear land of ours. With that

£20,000,000 alone we could have wiped out the tea tax, the sugar tax, and all the food taxes, and still have had a sum left which would have enabled you to attempt something in the way of better housing, better education, and so on, for our people. *As a matter of fact, we are the most heavily taxed nation for war purposes in Europe. The only comparative figures I have been able to obtain are for 1912. In that year the expenditure upon the Army and Navy in the United Kingdom worked out at just under 32s. per head. The next highest country is France, with 24s. 7d.; then comes Germany, with 17s. 8d.* But even the £51,000,000 odd which we are asked to spend upon the Navy during the coming year is not the only cost of the Navy. By the expenditure of this money you are withdrawing labor from remunerative and far more productive employment. To that extent there is a loss in the real wealth of the nation. The First Lord of the Admiralty talked yesterday, when he was dealing with the labor problem, as though it was a good thing for the community to spend money in the employment of labor for battleships. From the economic point of view, and I would add from the point of view of social economy, it would be just as wise, well, and profitable for the community to spend the same amount of money to employ the same labor to make fireworks and let them off.

What are the obstacles in the way of a substantial reduction of this expenditure? Why is it mounting up? The Governments—not only our own Government, but the Governments of all the European nations—profess to deplore it. *The only speech I have heard upon the question by a responsible Minister in recent years who did not deplore it and who did not make an appeal for a better understanding between the nations of Europe was the First Lord of the Admiralty yesterday.* The only thing in which he appeared to glory was that even the smaller nations of Europe were now getting a mania for a fleet and were trying to emulate the example set them by the great nations of Europe. What, in spite of these conditions, is the obstacle in the way of a better understanding? Lord Welby, who has held the highest and most responsible position as a permanent Civil Servant in this country, who was at the head of the Treasury, who is a man of world-wide reputation in matters of financial knowledge and a man of sterling probity, was speaking on this question a few weeks ago, and he said:

“We are in the hands of an organization of crooks. They are politicians, generals, manufacturers of armaments and journalists. All of them are anxious for unlimited expenditure, and go on inventing scares to terrify the public and to terrify Ministers of the Crown.”

I referred to the slang dictionary to see what was the meaning of “crooks.” I was familiar with it only as the name of a very popular and very peaceful Member of this House. When I turned up the meaning of this word in the dictionary I found that the same word may very often represent very different things. I find that the

definition of "a crook" is—it is an ugly word—"a thief," "a swindler," "a man who gains his ends by crooked ways." Let us translate Lord Welby's words. He says:

"We are in the hands of an organization of thieves! swindlers! They are politicians, generals, manufacturers of armaments, and all of them are anxious for unlimited expenditure, all go on inventing scares to terrify the public and to terrify the Ministers of the Crown."

ADMITS GERMANY WAS VICTIM OF FALSEHOOD.

That is an extremely serious charge to be made by a responsible ex-public servant like Lord Welby. Can it be substantiated? I venture to submit to this House that it can be substantiated up to the hilt. We had a scare in 1909. That was not the first scare of the same character. If time would permit I could go through half a dozen previous scares and show that the features of each were precisely the same. They were all engineered during a time of trade depression—and engineered for the purpose of forcing Governments to spend money in the provision of additional armaments. I am not going to deal at any length with the scare of 1909. It is so recent and the facts that later came to light were so remarkable that possibly the incidents are fairly well known. What was the state of trade in the ship-building world, and in many of the armament firms at the time when the scare was introduced? In the early part of 1909, Earl Cawdor, who presided at the Institution of Naval Architects, said:

"During the past twelve months, with the exception of the 'Vanguard' building at Barrow, not one British battleship has been laid down in a private shipbuilding yard at home."

The "Naval Annual" goes on to make a somewhat similar statement. I come to a statement made just about the same time by a gentleman who at that time was a member of this House, but who has since been translated to other regions. He was then known as Sir Charles MacLaren. He was the chairman and director of more than one of these armament firms. Sir Charles MacLaren, at the annual meeting of John Brown & Co., of which he is chairman, said:

"Things were bad twelve months ago, and he was sorry to say they were bad still. He had seen no evidence of improvement during the past twelve months, and really there was very little evidence of distinct improvement in the immediate future."

What was going on at the time of this exceptional depression? Why, all these firms were engaged in increasing their capital, putting down new slipways, preparing for the time which they knew from past experience, and their knowledge of instruments they were able to work, would come sooner or later. Just before the scare, Armstrong,

Whitworth & Co. had equipped a new gun-mounting shop with three erecting pits and ample storage room for ordnance; the Coventry Ordnance Works, Limited, had completed in 1908 their great gun-mounting establishment at Scotstoun. Messrs. Beardmore & Co., Limited, with the aid of Vickers, Limited, had been making extensions at Parkhead Works. All this time these men and their representatives were working behind the scene. The House will remember the Mulliner incident. Mr. Mulliner was a director of the Coventry Ordnance Works. What is the Coventry Ordnance Works? It is another name for John Brown & Co. The Cammel, Laird Company and the John Brown Company own most of the shares. Now, we had it on the authority of Mr. Mulliner himself that for three years before 1909 he was constantly writing to the Government and appealing to them in other ways to spend more money upon armaments, and *giving them information, which was afterwards found to be totally untrue, in relation to what Germany was doing.* I do not suppose that it is a very usual practice for Cabinet Ministers to interview commercial travelers and touts, but they made a departure on this occasion, and after three years of importunity, they enlisted the services of this gentleman, who was received by the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet; and then the Prime Minister and the First Lord of the Admiralty came down to this House with that bogus story about the acceleration of the German program, *and it has since come to light that their only authority was the man whose works were standing idle at that time, and who was so anxious to get Government work.* The statement which the hon. member for Fareham (Mr. Arthur Lee) made himself responsible for at that time will not be very soon forgotten. A cry went up: "We want eight, and we won't wait"; and they did not wait, and then the contingent ships were laid down, and they got the work. These are the very men who had been using this means to induce the public to spend money.

MEMBERS OF THE ARMAMENT RING.

I find from the Navy League Annual, that before this scare the amount of private contracts for new construction was £7,000,000. The year 1910-11 was the first year of the new program, and in that year private contracts went up by £4,500,000, but there was no more work given to the Government dockyards; it all went to private contractors of the armament ring, who forced the Government into this expenditure. I remember my hon. friend the Member for Woolwich (Mr. Crooks) pleading with the then First Lord of the Admiralty for some work for Woolwich. Hon. Members smile at that, but there you have the painful illustration of how this system incidentally makes a man do a thing which he and his party utterly abhorred. But the First Lord would give no part of the additional work to Woolwich.

It all went to increase the profits and the dividends of these private firms. What do I find on examination of the balance sheets of the firms which constitute the armament ring? I find in the year before the scare Messrs. Vickers' profits amounting to £424,000. Two years after that they were nearly double that amount. Every year since the success of their intrigue their profits have gone up—£474,000, £544,000, £745,000, £872,000. The precise figures of their profits for the last twelve months are not yet obtainable, but they show another addition, so that their profits are increased by £500,000 a year as a result of the success of the scare they engineered four years ago. Now, what are the other component parts of this ring? Let us take Armstrong's. That is the other firm in this ring of which the First Lord of the Admiralty spoke very affectionately some time ago. He said that the relations of the Admiralty with Vickers and another large firm in the trade are far more cordial than the ordinary relations of business. That might be one reason why the representative of these firms was received in audience at a Cabinet Council. In the year of the scare Armstrong's profits amounted to £429,000. They went on mounting up until last year (1912) they had risen to £777,000 with an increase in dividend. Another firm, Messrs. Beardmore, shows on examination of their profits exactly the same thing. In 1909 their profits were £72,000; in 1911 they were three times that sum—£201,000.

I have spoken of the armament ring. What is that ring? It is a combination of four, or five—strictly speaking—of the principal firms engaged in this trade. Patriotism is not one of the distinguishing features of the trade methods of this great combine. For instance, I find Messrs. Vickers have works at Barrow, Sheffield, Birmingham, but they do not confine themselves to this country. They have a yard in Placentia de las Armas, in Spain; they have another place in Spezzia, in Italy. They are evidently taking time by the forelock. They anticipate the promise of a Mediterranean squadron. It is no wonder that I find the shares of Vickers, Armstrong & Co., Cammell, Laird & Co. went up on the Stock Exchange after the report of the First Lord's speech. The ring has also an interest in the Whitehead Torpedo Factory in Fiume, in Austria-Hungary, and it is against Austria we are asked to lay down this Fleet in the Mediterranean. And, again, as the newspapers have reminded us so much in the last week or two, they have a place on the Volga, in Russia; indeed, they have two. They have also a shipyard in South America, and in anticipation of the development of the Canadian Navy, they have laid down works in Montreal. Another component part of the trust was there before them, and John Brown & Co. have what is going to be the largest shipyard in the world in New Brunswick.

WHITEHEAD TORPEDOES FOR AUSTRIA.

I said patriotism is not a distinguishing characteristic of the methods of these firms. As a matter of fact, these firms are not English. Their management is international and their shareholders are international. For instance, I find on examination of the share lists of Messrs. Vickers that they have shareholders living in Italy, Japan, Russia, Brazil, Canada, Australia, China, Spain, and Chili; and, after all, I think we are entitled to say that these men are true internationals. Now I ask again, what is this armament ring? It comprises Vickers, Armstrong, John Brown, Cammell, Laird—the Coventry Ordnance Works is a subsidiary firm. Vickers, for instance, not only own works directly, but they are large controllers of the Wolseley Tool and Motor Company and the Electric and Ordnance Accessories Company. Messrs. Vickers not only own the business with which their name is associated, but they own quarter the shares of Whitehead & Co.'s torpedo manufactory; and *Whitehead & Co., torpedo manufacturers, also have a large factory in Austria building torpedoes to destroy the ships that Vickers are building now.* So the shareholders of the armament ring can look forward with equanimity to whatever happens. It is no matter to them whether it is an Austrian ship or a German ship or a British ship that sinks, they can throw up their hats and shout, "More ships, more profits, higher dividends." John Brown & Co. have great works at Sheffield with which their name is associated, they have a great shipping yard on the Clyde bank, and they have over seven-eighths of the shares of Thomas Firth & Sons, Limited, and half the shares in the Coventry Ordnance Works. But I may add that after the Mulliner incident this company changed their managing director. After the exposure of the means by which he succeeded in engineering the naval scare of 1909 the Government came to the conclusion he was not the man who ought to be retained as managing director of the firm with which the Government had contracts; therefore Mr. Mulliner was discharged, and there was appointed in his place an Admiral of the Fleet, with a salary of £7,000 a year and seven years' engagement. John Brown are also associated with Beardmore; they interchanged two directors with Palmer's Ship-building Company and Projectile Company, and they have one director, in common with Hadfield Foundry, Limited, and with Cammell, Laird & Co., so that when you touch one of the firms of this ring you touch the others. You do not know, to use the words of the coster song, "Which is which, and which is the other." I come now to the shareholders. I find the trustee for the debenture holders in Vickers is Lord Sandhurst, who at the present time occupies the position of Lord Chamberlain. I find that the member for the Hallam Division of Sheffield (the Right Hon. Stuart-Wortley), who rose so promptly in the debate the other day—when the First Lord of the Admiralty had

suggested the possibility of getting armor plate from abroad—in order to point out that there were great firms in this country who had been encouraged by the expectation of Government work to lay down expensive plant. He practically said it would be a breach of faith on the part of the Government to take away from these people the expectations they had been given. The right hon. gentleman is a debenture trustee for Vickers, and he is also debenture trustee for Cammell, Laird & Co.

EVEN THE CHURCH IS AMONG THE GRAFTERS.

Now, who are the shareholders? It would be too long for me to give more than a very short selection from the list, but I find that hon. Members in this House are very largely concerned; indeed, it would be impossible to throw a stone on the Benches opposite without hitting a Member who is a shareholder in one or other of these firms. I am sorry for the sudden hilarity of my hon. friends, for the shareholders in these armament firms are not confined to Unionist Members. **I find that the bishops are very well represented.** Among the shareholders in Armstrong's I find the name of an hon. Member opposite as the holder of 5,000 shares—the Member for Armagh (Sir J. Lonsdale), who asked seven questions in five weeks in 1909—the scare year—as to when orders for gun-mountings would be placed. The hon. Member for Osgoldcross Division of Yorkshire (Sir J. C. Rickett)—I congratulate him on his election last week as hon. President of the Free Church Council—is the great Imperialist. I have often seen his portrait in the Jingo Press as that of a man who placed patriotism and Empire before all considerations of sordid selfishness. I find that he is the holder of 3,200 shares in John Brown's, and 2,100 shares in Cammell, Laird's. Another of the Members for Sheffield figures in practically every list, as he figures in every debate of this House when there is a possibility of more money being spent on arms and ships. I refer to the member for the Eccleshall Division (Mr. S. Roberts). He is a shareholder in John Brown's, a director of Cammell, Laird's, also debenture trustee of the Fairfield Company, and a shareholder in the Coventry Ordnance Works.

It would hardly be fair to ignore the Liberals altogether. I find that a director of Palmer's is Lord Aberconway, and that a Liberal Member of this House is one of his co-directors, the Member for the Bosworth Division of Leicester (Mr. H. D. McLaren). I spoke to the "internationalism" of this, and I find the shareholders in Cammell-Laird include a considerable number of names with which I am not familiar. Another shareholder in Cammell-Laird is the representative of the Northern Division of Manchester (Sir C. E. Swann). I want to say one or two words about the Harvey Trust, which was formed

a few years ago, and which represented, I think, the most up-to-date and complete form of capitalist organization the world has ever seen. Its internationalism was complete. It was formed for the purpose of working certain rights in the manufacture of armor plate, and it combined together the interests in Britain of Vickers, Armstrong's, Beardmore's, John Brown's, Fairfield, Cammell-Laird, the Projectile Company, Palmer's, and Hadfields-Coventry; of half a dozen of the leading firms in the United States; of firms in France, Italy, and Germany (Krupps). The directors were representatives of Beardmore's, John Brown's, Armstrong's, Vickers, Cammell-Laird's, the French Steel Company, Schneider's, and others.

I find in the list of shareholders here the name of the present Colonial Secretary, and the name of the present Postmaster-General also figures as a shareholder in Armstrong's. I said something about the cosmopolitan character of the shareholders' list. Of course, in such a combination as the Harvey Steel Trust, it is only to be expected that a large number of foreign names would appear. I referred a moment or two back to the case of the Admiral of the Fleet who had been appointed managing director of one of these undertakings. That is not the only instance in which men have been taken from the service of the Crown and placed directly in influential positions under this armament ring. There is, of course, a reason for it. I will not give it in my own words, but in those of a representative trade organ. There is a paper called "Arms and Explosives," devoted to the interests of the armament trade, and in September last this paper wrote—and I ask the special attention of the House to the quotation, because it puts the matter far more clearly than I could do:

"Contractors naturally are very keen to avail themselves of the services of prominent officers who have been associated with the work in which the contractors are interested. The chief thing is that they know the ropes, since the retired officer, who keeps in touch with his old comrades, is able to lessen some of these inconveniences, either by gaining early information of coming events, or by securing the ear of one who would not afford like favors to a civilian. . . . Kissing undoubtedly goes by favor, and some of the things that happen might be characterized as corruption. Still, judged by all fair tests the result is good. The organization of facilities for supply is maintained through times of peace on an efficient and economical basis. Manufacturers do not make huge profits, and they are enabled to survey from year to year, and to be on hand in the case of national emergency."

MORE HONORABLE GRAFTERS.

The thought of Armstrong's subsisting on a dividend of 12½ per cent., and Vickers on 10 per cent., putting an equal amount to the reserve fund, is most affecting. Sir Andrew Noble, of the Royal Artillery, joined Armstrong's in its early days. He is now chairman. There are other cases. I come to what I think will be admitted as the most serious of these transfers, the case of Sir George Murray,

who succeeded Lord Welby as Permanent Secretary of the Treasury, a position of great responsibility. Nothing can be more disastrous for the financial reputation of this country than that there should be a suspicion—I do not put it any higher—of the strict probity of men who are in the position of permanent head of this great Department. One cannot avoid suspicion being expressed in some quarters when a highly placed public servant takes his pension and immediately after takes his seat upon a board having the closest business relations with the Government. Why did he go to the board of Armstrong's? He is not an engineering expert; he is not a naval expert. I add, in the words of "Arms and Explosives," "He knows the ropes. He keeps in touch with his old comrades. He can smooth away any inconveniences." I will not, as this paper does, characterize it as corruption.

Then we have the case of Rear-Admiral Ottley, Naval Attaché to Russia, Japan, France, United States, and Italy—so that he will "know the ropes" on both sides. He was Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and he went from a position like this, a responsible adviser of the Government on these important matters, to be the director of a firm which is making huge profits out of Government contracts. This was the man of whom "Excubitor" said, when he was writing his articles on the Navy, that he "acquired, as Attaché, an intimate insight into the naval methods of foreign Powers. From all sources, home and foreign, facts, figures, deductions, and suggestions are continually passing into the Naval Intelligence Department at Whitehall." Now we are arming against Italy, and this man, ex-secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence, director of Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., is also a director of Armstrong's Italian firm, Armstrong-Pozzuoli, on the Italian coast. How can it be possible that naval secrets can be retained? Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., of Newcastle and of Italy, are in possession of the most confidential facts in relation to the doings of both the Italian Government and the British Government, and it would require a great amount of business probity to prevent them disclosing the facts from the one branch of the firm to the other.

Now turn to Vickers. Lord Sandhurst, who is the debenture trustee, was Under-Secretary for War in 1886 and from 1892 to 1895 in a Liberal Government. Then we come to a very interesting personality, Sir Lieutenant Trevor Dawson. He is managing-director of Vickers, lately acting as their superintendent of ordnance, and he is, of course, specially connected with their works at Spezzia, Italy. These men must have had the gift of prophecy and foresight. They must have known years ago that statements such as the one made by the First Lord would be made in this House. Sir Trevor Dawson is a director also of a steel foundry in Japan, so that, whether Japan be an ally of this country or not, they are going to be all right. He is also on the board of William Beardmore & Co. Yet the Navy talk about tender-

ing for contracts! How can you get a tender from Vickers? You are getting it from Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., and from William Beardmore & Co. The whole thing is a farce. I need not go through the list. There are dozens of them. There is not, as a matter of fact, a single large firm doing contract work for the Government which has not either upon its board or in its service a man who has been in the service of the Government and who knows the ropes, and who, in the words of that extract from "Arms and Explosives," is likely to be able to gain that various information which will be useful. I may just say a word about Hadfield's Steel Foundry. They have a very distinguished major-general upon their staff, Major-General Brackenbury. He was Director of Military Intelligence 1886-91, and he was a member of the Council of the Viceroy of India. He was President of the Ordnance Committee, 1896-9, at the War Office; Director of Ordnance, 1899-1904; and is a Vice-President of the National Service League.

WERE GETTING READY TO ATTACK GERMANY.

Yesterday the Nobel Trust decided to call in some hundreds of thousands worth of unsubscribed capital. Vickers, too, have announced that they are going to increase their share capital by £1,000,000. Why? The First Lord told us yesterday that their general trade had declined, and that they expected to be able to accelerate Government work on account of the greater scarcity of other kinds of work. **Why, at a time like this, when, judging by the evidence, one would think that we were near the beginning of a period of trade depression, should these companies increase their capital by millions?** They are just beginning now preparations for another scare, which will mature in two or three years' time, and if I have the opportunity of speaking in this place two or three years hence, I shall be able to repeat the facts and the instances associated with the previous scare down to the minutest detail. I said that the late First Lord stated that the relations between the Government and this armament ring were more cordial than the ordinary relations of business. They are, indeed; and the Government have, during the last few years, brought forward evidence that they do appreciate the patriotic services these firms render to the Departments. One of the first acts of this Liberal Government was to ennoble Mr. Pirrie, of Harland & Wolff, and he is a debenture trustee of the Coventry Ordnance and John Brown & Company. You cannot touch one without touching the other. The ordinary man would never suspect that the great shipbuilding firm of Harland & Wolff had very much interest in armaments. All the ordinary man knows about Harland & Wolff is that it has built some of the great Atlantic liners. Mr. Hadfield, the chairman of a very successful company which for a great many years has never paid less than 20 per cent., was knighted in 1908. Lieutenant Trevor

Dawson, of Vickers, and of other firms in the ring, was made a knight in 1909. I may pass over the baronetcy which was given to the late Lord Furness, afterward followed by a peerage. Sir Charles MacLaren, chairman of one of the rings, was, as we know, ennobled. There are others. There is the case of Lord Glenconner, who combines the positions of chairman of the Tharsis Sulphur and Copper Company and an influential shareholder in Nobels, with that of the High Commissioner of the Kirk in Scotland. I want to speak now with particular reference to Italy and Austria, because it is against Italy and Austria that we are asked to equip the Mediterranean Fleet. I have already referred to the fact that Vickers have works in association with the Vickers-Terni Company in Italy. They are also interested in Whitehead's Torpedo Works at Fiume, in Hungary. The Vickers-Terni seem to be to Italy what Vickers is to Great Britain. The "Engineer" newspaper says they are not to be considered as a private company, but as a national institution working for national aims. The "Navy League Annual" for 1911 had this very illuminating paragraph:—

"The modern naval resources of Italy for the building of warships owe their own origin in no small measure to the cooperation of British capital and resources."

In diplomacy we are supposed to be not on very good terms with Italy. It is necessary to spend millions in building "Dreadnoughts" to protect our interests in the Mediterranean against the possible aggression of Italy, and yet at the same time Italian warship building is indebted to the cooperation of British capital and resources. It is no use going through the list. I could give a great many others. Therefore, if ever these Italian ships—let Heaven long delay the time!—do come in conflict with our own ships, it will be *British capital that will be booming on both sides*. Just a word or two about Austria, as the position of Austria has assumed great importance from the statement made by the First Lord yesterday. *Submarines and all the torpedoes used in the Austrian Navy, besides several of the new sea-planes, are made by the Whitehead Torpedo Works in Hungary*. This firm has also a place at Weymouth. They are making torpedoes for the British Navy at Weymouth, and torpedoes with British capital in Hungary in order to destroy British ships. This reference appeared in Armstrong, Whitworth & Co.'s annual report in regard to their interests in Austrian torpedo works:—

"The directors in view of the important part played by torpedoes in naval warfare have acquired an interest in Whitehead & Company."

MORE MISREPRESENTATIONS ABOUT GERMANY.

I want to refer very briefly to one other point. Members of Parliament who are not directors of armament firms and not shareholders

cannot always avoid being influenced in their actions by the fact that they have in their constituency those who are interested. I make no personal imputation whatever upon the honesty of the Hon. Member whose words I am going to quote. I am quite sure that he regrets the action I am now going to describe as much as any man possibly could. We have in this House some half-dozen Members who represent dock-yard constituencies, or in whose constituencies are firms who employ a large number of men who, under existing conditions, depend for their livelihood upon naval expenditure. The Hon. Member who represents the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Sir J. Tudor Walters) is in such an unfortunate position. He was addressing his constituents on July 31, 1907, and it appears that there had been complaints that he had not been getting sufficient orders from the Admiralty and from the War Office for Sheffield, and he was being compared with his predecessor to his own disadvantage in this respect. This is what he said in a public speech in his constituency:—

“When he secured from the Government a large order for Sheffield, he was not so simple as to go shouting about it in the House of Commons. If you shout you cannot do much. If you want to accomplish things, you have to go to work quietly and carefully. It is not for me to shout about orders. It is for me to go to the War Office and the Admiralty and get them.”

Nobody, I think, can help feeling sympathy with a Member of Parliament who is compelled, like a commercial bagman, to go to the War Office and the Admiralty begging for orders because the maintenance of his seat depends on his success in that direction. What can I suggest as a way out of the difficulty? The first suggestion I make is that something must be done to get out of the clutches of these crooks, swindlers, and thieves, politicians and generals, makers of armaments. It is also important we should give some practical proof of our desire that this naval expenditure should end. In spite of the high-sounding words uttered by successive First Lords of the Admiralty in favor of a reduction of naval armaments, nothing practical has been done. The right Hon. gentleman spoke some time ago about a naval holiday, but *it was stated in the last naval debate in the Reichstag that there never had been any proposal made by this Government for the reduction of international armaments.* If this profession means anything at all, let the Government give it practical shape. Year after year we hear statements in Germany and France, as well as in this country, about the wasteful expenditure on armaments. Not long since our present Foreign Secretary said that if this thing went on there could be only one of two possible results: either a Europe knee-deep in blood or bankrupt European nations. What is the use of such talk? Is European statesmanship so bankrupt that it cannot find any means of giving practical expression to what everybody professes to be their desires?

We have been told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that this

is the most favorable moment in the last twenty years for doing this. When we opened our newspaper last New Year's morning and read his New Year's message to the nation, some of us hoped, and were for a moment inclined to believe, that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was at last going to have the courage of the late Lord Randolph Churchill. But we have been disappointed. What did he say?—

“The most favorable moment for the last twenty years.”

And he went on to say:—

“Unless Liberalism seizes this favorable opportunity it will be false to its noblest traditions, and those who have the consciences of Liberalism in their charge will be written down for all time as having betrayed their trust.”

Are Ministers to be written down for all time as having betrayed their trust? I have noticed what has been to me a very painful change during the last week or two in the attitude of two or three Liberal journals upon this question. I do not hesitate to mention names—the “Manchester Guardian,” the “Nation,” and the “Daily News and Leader.” Three months ago they were speaking on this question in a way which gave satisfaction to all of us. But they have been practically silent during the last few weeks, and last week the “Nation” dismissed the whole question in one short paragraph in the news topics. What is the meaning of that? I think the explanation is that pressure has been brought to bear upon these people to remain silent. Appeals may have been made to them, pointing out the present precarious position of certain other questions. I am as ardently anxious to see Home Rule placed on the Statute Book as any Member of this House, but you can pay too high a price even for that. Whatever may be the fate of the Government, I, for one, and I speak practically for all my colleagues, will not give one vote in this House during the present session, whatever the consequences may be, which can be construed by any stretch of imagination as being in support either of the amount of these Estimates or of the policy foreshadowed by the First Lord yesterday. Really it is time that we changed all this wasteful expenditure. It is time we began to realize that a beautiful school is a grander sight than a battleship—a contented and prosperous peasantry than great battalions. It is time we began to realize that

“Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war.”

The Prime Minister stated some weeks ago that the solution of this question was in the hands of international democracy. It is so. The peoples of the world have in the past trusted to kings, nobles, and plutocrats, and each of them has failed. It is now for the people to trust themselves. The workers of the world have no animosities; they

have no jealousies; they have no diverse interests. All they want is freedom to work and the right to enjoy the fruits of their labor. I say again we echo, in the same sentiments as our comrades in the French Parliament and the German Reichstag, our determination to do what we can to change national opinion and national ideas upon this question, and I do not despair of our doing so. The dawn comes slow—how slow!—but it does come, and I believe that out of the chaos and strife that now prevail there are rising brighter and better times, when nation will no more lift up its head against nation, and when all the people of the earth will realize that of all the great and priceless blessings of humanity, the greatest of all is peace.

New Light on the Causes of the War

DR. F. C. CONYBEARE, FAMOUS OXFORD SCHOLAR, RADICALLY REVISES
HIS OPINIONS AND FRANKLY RESTATES HIS POSITION.

The following letter of Dr. Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare was addressed to a friend in America, and is reprinted here in its original form. The author is a Fellow of the British Academy, Officier d'Academie; Hon. Doc. Theologiæ Giessen; Hon. LL.D., St. Andrews; Member of the Armenian Academy of Venice, etc. He is also the author of numerous works on Armenian texts and theological subjects, including "The Roman Catholic Church in International Politics" and "The Historicity of Christ." The letter appeared in "The Vital Issue," to which credit is due for its republication here.—Ed.

Oxford, 5, 3, 15.

My Dear

Many thanks for your last letter. I will come to that presently, for your own attitude and the treatment of Poles in Prussia and much else we have written to each other about are things on the fringe of the vital questions I want to treat of in this letter. I feel that I owe it to you to write this, for I know that you will understand my feelings. In August and September and October I felt so sure that England had all the right on her side and Germany all the wrong, that I hardly troubled to read the diplomatic documents given in the English, German, French and Russian books. At the beginning of October my attention was first drawn to the Emperor's correspondence with the Tsar, and I realized then that he had made a sincere effort for peace in the days July 28-31, and you perhaps saw my acknowledgment of the same in the *New York Nation*. I am not the man to see clearly a point in favor of the enemy and to conceal it.

Next I got M. P. Price's "Diplomatic History of the War," which gives all the diplomatic dispatches, and correlates them with one another and with contemporary events so far as these were ascertainable from Reuter's telegrams, newspaper correspondents abroad, etc. The book is temperately written, without bias or flag-waving, and I commend it to your notice. The points that are driven into me by a perusal of it and of all the documents are these:—

FRANZ FERDINAND'S AUSTRIA.

1. That in the days 23-28, July, Berlin made a great mistake in not obliging Franz Joseph to withdraw, or rather moderate, his note to Servia. I quite realize what a testy, obstinate, autoritaire and somewhat senile old gentleman your foreign office had to deal with in him, and I know how mistaken our press is in supposing that he consults

Berlin before he acts. On this occasion he took the bit in his teeth, probably aided by that arch-oppressor, the Magyar Tisza. On the other hand I recognize the provocation under which Austria was. The murdered Grand Duke was a sensible fellow, whose ambition, I believe, was to conciliate the small Slav nations of Austria-Hungary. He would have grouped the Slovaks with Moravia and Bohemia and have been crowned their King at Prague. He would also have grouped Bosnia and Herzegovina with Croatia, and have been crowned at Agram. The dual monarchy would thus have become a quadruple one. The Germans in Hungary would, as far as possible, have been like other nationalities rescued from the Magyar and incorporated with Vienna. Roumania would have been drawn inside the Austrian Bund and the Roumanians of Hungary added to her. She could not have continued to stand alone, and as her trade with Germany is great and her natural antipathy to Russia equally great, she would have formed a permanent alliance with the great group system on her western side. Just because he was a constructive statesman, the Archduke was murdered, for his accession to the throne would have been the death-knell of Pan-Slav ambitions in Austria-Hungary. Possibly Bulgaria and Servia would have joined on same terms. If Germany wins in this war she will, I hope, constrain Austria-Hungary to reform themselves in some such way as I have sketched out, for it is vital to Germany to keep Austria-Hungary together, and to keep her together you must put the Magyar into his place. If she wins she will also have to group Polish Galicia and Russian Poland and East Posen together and give them some home rule show of their own; the Poles are so thoroughly latinized that their sympathies would always lie with Vienna and South Germany, rather than with Russia. The German Empire on the west of this great congeries would act as a center of gravity to it, and I am not sure that the whole might not have been drawn into the German customs union. It is then, in my opinion, a terrible pity the Archduke was murdered, certainly if my idea of his policy is correct.

SIR EDWARD'S SECRET.

2. Sir Edward Grey had, behind our backs, mortgaged our fleet, our only serious arm, to France *unconditionally*. I believe only Asquith and two or three other members of the Cabinet were in this secret. The public knew, in a vague way, of the Triple *Entente*, but no one suspected that Grey's diplomacy had left us no choice of our quarrels, and that *we were, by it, as much lashed to Russia's chariot wheels as France*.

SERVIA AS A LEVER.

3. In spite of the affinity of Servian language and religion to Russian, I do not believe Petersburg cared for Servia, save as a lever

with which to disintegrate Austria. Bulgaria is as close to Russia in these ways, yet was cynically sacrificed by Russia after the war with Turkey, partly because she came out of it stronger than Russia liked, and partly because she did not serve so well as a lever against Austria. To go a step farther back, Austria courted risk in this danger in 1908 by not getting consent of signatory powers of Berlin treaty of 1878, before she threw off the suzerainty of Turkey, and the Kaiser, like a foolish fellow, went and crowed over Russia when she had climbed down in a case where for once she was not wrong.

SAZONOF'S VICTIM.

4. When the crisis began on July 24, Sazonof and Cambon at once set to work to drag Grey by his heels into "complete solidarity" with Russia and France in the coming conflict. Had Grey only followed the advice of Buchanan, our Ambassador in Russia, we would not have gone in; for the latter told Sazonof straight out that "England's interests in Serbia were nil, and a war on behalf of that country would never be sanctioned by British public opinion." Instead of adhering to this advice, sensible in itself and truly reflecting the feelings of most of our cabinet, of our Parliament and electorate, Grey set himself to follow Sazonof, who has had him in his waistcoat pocket for a long time past. I give him credit for having wanted peace, but Sazonof worked on this side of him and got him to believe that Germany would back down if he assured Lichnowsky (as he did on July 29, see White Paper 89) that England, if the war spread, would go in with France and Russia. The stupid ass could not see that Sazonof, once assured of English support, of English money and fleet, would steam straight ahead and set himself to provoke the Kaiser to declare war. Thus instead of securing peace as he hoped, he took the very line that must lead to war.

THE INEXORABLE SAZONOF

5. Germany was quite ready to take on France and Russia if they gave her a chance, but did not want to take on us as well; and that is why Bethmann Hollweg, on the afternoon of July 29, as soon as he heard of the hostile attitude Grey had taken up to Lichnowsky (see our White Paper 89) sent in hot haste to Goschen at 11 P.M. to make a bid for our neutrality (White Paper 85), and the same night at 2 A.M. to Sazonof (*ibid.*, 97). That Count Pourtalès, a man whom, from all I have read about him, I should dearly like to meet, "completely broke down" in this interview and "appealed to Sazonof to make some suggestion which he could telegraph to the German Government as a last hope," proves how anxious Germany was to keep the peace at this time. But Sazonof already knew from Paul Cambon of Grey's

virtual ultimatum (*ibid.*, 89) to Lichnowsky, and was inexorable. The more Germany yielded, the more provocative and imperious he became.

PROVOCATIVE MOBILIZATION.

6. Germany's one aim now was to avoid a war in which England would almost certainly join, "drawn in," as Grey puts it, by his secret agreement with France and through France with Russia. Accordingly Germany accepted any terms from Sazonof and urged Austria to accept them. Sazonof (*ibid.*, 133) admits to de Etter that Austria accepted them and had done so already when he mobilized against Germany, I believe with the express intention of provoking the Kaiser to war, in which (with the help of the war party in Berlin) he succeeded.

GREY THREATENS TO RESIGN.

7. Meanwhile Grey had great difficulty with the Cabinet, a majority of whom flatly refused to go to war with Germany over Servia and preferred to throw over Grey's naval and other agreements with France (which on July 30 Cambon urged Grey to execute without delay, see White Paper 105). Grey threatened to resign, but on July 31 agreed to stay on until it was known if Germany would respect or not Belgium neutrality, as to which, on July 29 (White Paper 85), the German Chancellor had spoken ambiguously. If he really feared that France would violate it he should have demanded of us an assurance that we would defend it *vi et armis* against France. We could not have refused such an assurance. But Belgian neutrality was the only thing the majority in our Cabinet really cared about, and unless it—a small country—was violated by Germany, a big one—the English people could not be relied upon to join in any war. Nothing else appealed to them in the least, and not a soul had any idea that Germany had already offered to respect Belgium. Accordingly on the afternoon of July 31 Goschen sounded von Jagow about Belgium, and he could not answer without consulting the Kaiser and the Chancellor. The Kaiser, ever anxious to keep us out (and probably aware also that Russia would retire across the golden bridge he had built as soon as ever she learned that we were going to be neutral and not help her in her designs) ordered Lichnowsky to offer to respect Belgium and also to guarantee integrity of France and of French colonies, to offer, in short, any conditions in order to keep us out. Our Cabinet in its turn anxious only to get from Germany a favorable answer about Belgium and to be able to keep the peace with Germany, met early on August 1 and drew up a memorandum about it, which Grey was to submit to Lichnowsky. There was perhaps some one in the Cabinet who pointed out that to challenge Germany to respect Belgium, after signifying our intention of supporting France anyhow, was a work of supererogation.

It was in effect to say: "I am going to war anyhow with you," and at the same time: "I will go to war with you if you touch Belgium." The Germans would probably answer: "We may as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb, and if we, anyhow, have to fight you, why should we forego the military advantages of going through Belgium?"

THAT FAMOUS No. 123.

In our White Paper No. 123 may be read Grey's own abstract of his conversation with Lichnowsky. At about 1.30, on August 1, Lichnowsky freely offered to respect Belgium and also to guarantee the integrity of France and of her colonies, although France (who really needed a strait waist-coat to keep her out of a quarrel, which was not hers) could not complain, if she was beaten, of Germany helping herself to some of her colonies. Grey might have said to Lichnowsky that he could not barter our neutrality against an undertaking by Germany to respect Belgium, seeing that it was anyhow Germany's duty to respect Belgium. However, our Cabinet was in a bartering mood, and they only wanted an excuse for not going to war with Germany. Lichnowsky therefore adopted the bartering tone and so did Grey. Grey evidently expected Lichnowsky to offer no sort of terms, and when Lichnowsky made the proposals as he did, and furthermore besought him to formulate any conditions on which England would consent to be neutral, Grey refused all on the pretext of keeping his hands free (see No. 123). Lichnowsky must have gone away with the conviction that Grey anyhow wanted war.

GERMANY'S PROPOSALS CONCEALED FROM THE CABINET.

Now our Cabinet plainly expected Grey to report to them at once any disposition to yield, if Germany showed signs of it. He knew that if he reported Lichnowsky's proposals, the Cabinet would jump at them, and then he would be unable to execute his secret bond to France and Russia. What did he do? He told none of his colleagues of them on August 1, and when the Cabinet met next morning, August 2, he concealed them from the entire Cabinet, as he did from the House of Commons next day, August 3. By doing so, he precipitated us into this war; I say he tricked us into war; us, a generous people (who—except for a few rabid chauvinists on the Tory side—were averse to war with Germany with whom we were for the first time since Agadir on cordial terms) into war with you. Take my word for it, Grey will, in good time, be running for his life over this sinister business. Bismarck, in 1870, modified a telegram in order to provoke that owl Louis Napoleon into a declaration of war; Grey deliberately concealed from his colleagues and from Parliament overtures made by Lichnowsky, which would have been accepted at once; but for Grey's action Belgium

would not have been turned into a shambles, and in all probability Russia would have professed her satisfaction that Austria had accepted her terms (dictated by Sazonof to Pourtalès at 2 A. M. on July 30) and have shut up. I consider that Grey acted more criminally than Bismarck ever did.

SIR EDWARD'S "HARD LYING."

8. Mark the sequel. War ensued over Belgium, and weeks of it ensued before any one knew of the interview given in White Paper 123. As soon, however, as Parliament met on August 27, Keir Hardie, who spotted it, asked Grey whether he had submitted Lichnowsky's proposals to the Cabinet and why they had not been made the basis of peace with Germany. Grey in his answer acknowledged that he had disclosed it to no one at the time, and excused himself on the ground that Lichnowsky in No. 123 was speaking *de suo* and without authority from Berlin. He acknowledged that Lichnowsky was actuated in making these proposals by a sincere desire for peace with us, but declared that Berlin in the background was sincerely working for war. And yet he must have been well aware that Lichnowsky was acting on instructions from Berlin, as Lichnowsky's three dispatches sent to Berlin about that interview at 1:15 P. M., 5:30 P. M. and 8:30 P. M. on August 1 sufficiently prove. Moreover had Grey not *known* that Lichnowsky's proposals were authoritative and bound the German Government, he would never have wired them at once to Goschen, lest the latter should get at cross purposes with our foreign office in the matter. All Grey's answers to Keir Hardie on August 27 are thus a model of *hard lying, suppressio veri and suggestio falsi*. Naturally the House of Commons, having been utterly hoodwinked by him, applauded. *Presently they will send him to the gallows*. I doubt if even Asquith knew of this crime, for on August 6 he based his whole argument on White Paper 85, but if he really was Grey's accomplice, he will swing too. I fancy Lloyd George—a plastic tool in Grey's hands—begins to smell a rat, for he is going about the country now protesting loudly that he and the English democracy could and would never have been induced to go to war except by the aggression on Belgium. And that was certainly so. Look at last Saturday's "Economist," edited by that decent fellow Hirst, and you will read how the whole business community in London and elsewhere suddenly swing round in favor of war on August 5, having till then abhorred the idea of war with Germany.

ONE APACHE FOR EVERY 500 SOLDIERS.

9. And this shows what a calamitous error it was for Germany to invade through Belgium. It was bad enough for the Kaiser to send his ultimatum on August 1, instead of waiting to see if Russia would

not send him one, as she might very likely have done, though I doubt if without being fairly certain of us she would have done so, certainly not had we declared our neutrality in time. The Belgium populace were sure to assail the invading army; that led to terrible excesses; and the wringing of large fines out of the poor starving population has accumulated in Italy—of which I read the papers—and in America a bitterness against Germany which a more generous and humane treatment of Belgium would have avoided. Of course I do not believe all the atrocities retailed in our papers. Allowing one apache for every 500 soldiers that went through Belgium you would get 2,000 of them, and that would explain as much of the stories as is likely to be true. You cannot avoid a sprinkling of apaches in every army, and the remarks of the authors of the History of the Boer War compiled for the German General Staff about the atrocities our men were accused of in the Transvaal (not only abroad but in England) are sound and full of common sense.

“THIS SINISTER LIAR, GREY.”

10. I trust that Germany will respect the “positively formal assurance (made on August 4 in London) that, even in the case of armed conflict with Belgium, Germany will, under no pretence whatever, annex Belgium territory.” I believe on that basis and on an undertaking of Germany to evacuate France, Wilson could restore peace between our two countries to-morrow, and put an end to all this useless murder.

One thing we must insist on over here is that this sinister liar, Grey, who forever has peace on his lips and war in his heart should go. We cannot trust him and his accomplice Sazonof to make peace for England.

THAT PRESS CAMPAIGN.

11. I have said nothing of another side of the whole wretched matter, that is of the wicked press campaign which for years preceded this war in both countries. Too many, even sensible, Englishmen had derived from it the feeling that Germany wanted to attack us, and for that reason were ready to condone our attacking her, in case France was at war with her. I am not surprised if the suspicious Germans entertained of our desire to “down” Germany at the first opportunity, seem to them to have been verified by this war. In point of fact, that was uppermost in English minds all through, and what has poured over two millions of our youth into the army, was very respectable wrath at the treatment of Belgium. Nothing else would have rallied the nation to the government. Grey had repeatedly assured the country that our entente with Russia and France was in no way directed against Germany.

KING LEOPOLD'S ADVICE.

12. I don't know if you sent me Bernstein's fac similes of sundry "military conversations" between our military attaché at Brussels and the Belgium Generals. The first is an outline of a conversation, at the end of it the word *fin* (preceding name of month) only implies that it was held at that date. The printed copy turns *fin* into *fini* and this is translated *concluded*, making it appear to be a diplomatic instrument or treaty, with binding power, which it was not. It is a mere ébauche, as is also the next document. *Fini* could anyhow in French not mean *concluded* or *ratified* as Bernstein seems to think, but only the explicit you put at end of a book. No doubt in the second document our military attaché proposes to land English troops to defend Belgium in case she were invaded whether Belgium asked for them or not, but there is no evidence that any agreement in that sense was reached by our Foreign Office. I much doubt it and our Foreign Office denies it. It is a pity that the Belgians did not follow the advice of Leopold II., given 25 years ago, and put up an army, like Switzerland, suitable to their population and means; for then the German staff would never have planned forcing the Meuse, defended as it would have been by 100,000 men, at the outset of a campaign. They knew quite well that we as guarantors of their country's neutrality were in the position of a man who, having £5, backs a bill for a million sterling.

And now I have said not all it was in my mind to say, but as much as you will want to read. You are free to show this letter to any one you like and even print it if you like. I do not see that any harm could result from my opinions being known, and I air them very freely here, already at two meetings of University tutors and the other night before the Fabians. I am writing a pamphlet on Grey for the Labor League. Meanwhile we must go on fighting it out, but I hope not for long.

Ever yours sincerely,

F. C. CONYBEARE.

A Letter to Lord Northcliffe

BY A. G. GARVIN, EDITOR LONDON "NEWS."

Lord Northcliffe is the owner of the "London Times," the "Daily Mail" (commonly called the "Daily Liar") and the "Evening News." He is the controlling factor in the "Nowoje Wremja," the leading paper in Russia, the "Matin" of Paris, and owner of the "Daily Mail" published in Paris. He is also believed to have interests in several important American papers, and supplies the cable news to a number of papers published in New York and elsewhere. He endeavored to start a "Daily Mail" in Berlin, some years ago, but met with no encouragement, and thenceforward devoted all his energy through his various organs to involving Germany and German policies in suspicion throughout the world. Lord Northcliffe, head of the Harmsworth Press, is the man who poisoned public opinion in England and the United States against Germany, and together with Sir Edward Grey, Delcassé, Poincaré, Sazanoff and Ivolsky, is held by a great many men, even in England, as responsible for the present terrible world's war. It is well to discredit all war reports emanating from the Harmsworth Press as they appear in American papers. King Edward made him a peer for his share in the efforts to stir up trouble and to destroy the German nation. In London his name is execrated by many and he is personally held in general contempt.—ED.

My Lord,

This is not a time when I should wish to write to you or about you, for there is something indecent at such a moment in inflicting the old battle-cries on the public. But you have chosen to issue a book of newspaper scraps the object of which is to cover yourself and the *Daily Mail* with honor as the true prophets of the war and *The Daily News* and other representatives of Liberalism with odium as the false prophets of peace. To let such a challenge pass would be a wrong to the cause which this journal holds sacred, and therefore, unwillingly, I address you.

Your claim to be the true prophet of the war does not call for dispute. It has always been your part to prophesy war and cultivate hate. There is nothing more tempting to the journalist than to be an incendiary. It is the short cut to success, for it is always easier to appeal to the lower passions of men than to their better instincts. There is a larger crowd to address, and you have never deserted the larger crowd. The student of your career will find it difficult to point to anything that you have done and to say "Here Lord Northcliffe sacrificed his journalistic interests for the common good, for the cause of peace, for some great human ideal that brought no grist to his mill; here he used his enormous power not to enrich himself but to enrich the world." But he will have no difficulty in pointing to the wars you have fomented, the hatreds you have cultivated, the

causes you have deserted, the sensations, from the Pekin falsehood to the Amiens falsehood about the defeat of the British Army, that you have spread broadcast. You have done these things, not because of any faith that was in you, not because of any principle you cherished. You have done them because they were the short cut to success—that success which is the only thing you reverence amidst all the mysteries and sanctities of life.

“NOTHING.”

If one could find in you some ultimate purpose, even some wholesome and honest hate, you would present a less pitiful spectacle to the world. You would at least be a reality. But you are nothing. In all this great and moving drama of humanity you represent no idea, no passion, no policy, no disinterested enthusiasm. Like Mr. Lowell's candidate you

scent wick pays the best an' then
Go into it baldheaded.

When you preached war against the Boers it was not that you hated the Boers or loved England: it was only that you understood how to sell your papers. When you preached war against France, told her that we would roll her in “mud and blood” and give her colonies to Germany, it was not that you had any rooted antagonism to France, but that you knew how to exploit the momentary passions of the British mob. When you called for reprisals against Russia over the North Sea incident it was not that you did not know that there had been a mistake, but that you knew that a cry for war was a good newspaper thrill. When last spring you set all your papers from *The Times* downward prophesying “civil war” and went to Ulster to organize your brigade of war correspondents and triumphantly announced that hostilities were about to begin, it was not that you cared for Unionism or hated Home Rule. You care for neither and have coquetted with both. It was only that you thought that Parliament was going to be beaten and that you could be the prophet of red ruin and the breaking up of laws. Even your loves are rooted in hates as meaningless as your loves. *When you covered the Kaiser with adulation, called him “Our friend in need,” and pleaded for an alliance with Germany, it was only to make your gospel of war with France more effective. In a word, you have been the incendiary of journalism for twenty years—a man ever ready to set the world in a blaze to make a newspaper placard.*

MR. F. E. SMITH'S TRIBUTE

And as you have been the preacher of war abroad so you have been the preacher of discord and hate at home. There is not a movement of our time to which you have contributed one idea, one peaceful in-

fluence, one constant loyalty. When you thought the Insurance Bill was popular you supported it; when you thought it was going to be unpopular you travestied it, misrepresented it, and organized the servant girls and the duchesses to resist it. When the Progressives were assured of victory in 1904 you were their champion; when you saw the tide had turned in 1907 you turned a stream of virulent slander against them and headed the most infamous campaign in all the annals of our public life.

Do you say that this is malice dictated by party feeling? You are mistaken. I am conscious of no feeling for you except scorn, and, I think, a little pity, for indeed a life like yours is a thing for pity. But lest anyone should think that I am prejudiced, let me call Mr. F. E. Smith as a witness. This is what he said of you on August 5, 1911:

I remember, a few years ago, when Mr. Chamberlain introduced his Tariff Reform proposals the *Daily Mail* said it was opposed to them because they constituted a stomach tax. Well, being at that time very young and simple, I thought they must be right. A few days later I opened the *Daily Mail* and read "Mr. Chamberlain's great campaign. Triumph of Tariff Reform. Necessity of taxes on corn to cement the Empire." Well, I, like the *Daily Mail*, have always had a mind open to conviction. So I said "Certainly," and I spent four or five years in backing up the *Daily Mail* over that. Well, I opened the *Daily Mail* about three months ago and I read the leading article, and it said "Tariff Reform is dead." Where are we? . . . No one has followed them more faithfully than I have. When they said to me "Don't buy Trust soap," I didn't. When they told me there had been a massacre in Pekin I bought crepe. I think it is rather hard lines that in the middle of my political life I should be left with only two subjects on which I can give them ungrudging support—"Standard" bread and sweet peas. I can understand and even admire their desire to preserve an ancient barony from contamination.

That is what your friends think of you. What is there left for your foes to say? Indeed, *the late Lord Salisbury said the final word about you long ago. The "Daily Mail," he said, was "written by office boys for office boys,"* and though you have soared to *The Times* since then, you have only succeeded in dyeing it with the colors of the office boy's mind. For just as it was the *Daily Mail* which proclaimed the massacre of Pekin, so it was *The Times* that proclaimed the rout of the British Army.

And you charge "Mr. Cadbury's *Daily News*" with "horrible commercialism." Mr. George Cadbury has ceased his connection with *The Daily News* for years past, and you know it, but it pleases you to strew the pages of the *Daily Mail* and the *Evening News* with venomous allusions to his name. In the abysses of your mind you discover that that name appeals to some poor prejudice or some vulgar ignorance. Perhaps you are right. But the record of George Cadbury can be left to the judgment of his countrymen. His work is known. Your work, too, is known. I think I know on which side the scales of judgment will fall.

WHY WE WORKED FOR PEACE

But you say that we prophesied peace. Yes, we not only prophesied peace, but we worked for peace, just as *you prophesied war and worked for war*. We lost and you won. And you rejoice in the victory that has made Europe a shambles. Is it really a matter for rejoicing? A million men have died on the battlefields of Europe already and a million more will die. Millions of lives are being broken, millions of poor homes darkened by death and suffering. Is this really a subject for a newspaper advertisement? Do not suppose that we could not have preached war, too. It is the easiest thing in the world. It makes you popular, it brings you readers—as you know. It is so much simpler to burn down than to build up, and a fool can light a powder barrel. The crowd will run to a fire, but it will never run to see the builder add stone to slow stone. No, we did not work for peace because it paid. It does not pay to go against the popular tide. No one knows that so well as you who talk of the “horrible commercialism of *The Daily News*,” and who have spent your life in an infamous servitude to the changing passions of the hour. We worked for peace because we believed that that was the duty of a responsible journal. We worked for peace because we wanted to see a better and a juster world, because we believed that the fulcrum of human society is international cooperation and not international enmity, that civilization cannot coexist with barbarism, that war would ruin all the hopes of that social readjustment, that alleviation of the lot of the poor, that was the purpose for which *The Daily News* was founded and for which, whatever its failures, it has lived.

WAS IT A LOST CAUSE?

And who shall say that in working for peace we were working for a lost cause? It was not a lost cause. Did Mr. Bonar Law believe it was a lost cause when he made that memorable speech in November, 1911, in which he repudiated the doctrine of the inevitable war, recalled how in past years there had been prophecies of “inevitable” wars with Russia which had not taken place, showed how the perspective of the world was constantly changing, and declared that if war took place it would be due not to any irresistible natural laws, but to the want of human wisdom? Were we wrong in working to strengthen that human wisdom or were you wrong in working to destroy it? You yourself had moments of penitence. *Only last year you published in the Evening News a eulogium of the Kaiser far more extravagant than anything that ever appeared in these columns—a eulogium in which you spoke of that “gallant gentleman’s” efforts for the peaceful development of his country, of his just ambitions, of his word “which was better than many another’s bond,” and of the respect*

in which this country held him. If you believed that war was inevitable, what was the motive for that extravagant praise? But, most conclusive of all, on this question of whether peace was a lost cause, turn to the French Yellow Book published this week. There you will find the King of the Belgians and the French Ambassador at Berlin recording only last year a change in the attitude of the Kaiser. Till then, they agreed, he had stood for peace and had resisted the warlike influences about him as he had resisted them for a quarter of a century. Now at last they saw he had yielded. Only a year ago.

Why had he yielded? Why was the cause of peace lost? I do not minimize the evil influence of the militarist party in Germany. Perhaps that evil influence was destined in any case to prevail. Who shall say? *But can you doubt that among the factors that finally delivered the Kaiser into the hands of the militarists was the ten years of bitter newspaper war carried on between the incendiary Press of this country and the equally incendiary Press of Germany?* Can you absolve yourself from any share in bringing this calamity upon the world? Nay, do you wish to absolve yourself? Are you not rather claiming this war as a tribute to your prescience and your power? *

1815-1915

But even if, in working for peace, we were working for a lost cause is that a fact for which we need to apologize? What is the case of this country before the world? Is it not this, that we have had no designs against Germany, that we desired to live at peace with her, that we strove to live at peace with her, that we were driven to war regretfully and by compulsion? If that is our case, then to have worked for peace is to have worked for the good name of this country, for its honor and for its freedom from complicity in this vast crime. But you deny this case. You proclaim to all the world that the most powerful Press in this country worked steadily not for peace, but for war. And to that extent you have made us partners with the guilty. That is your claim. That is your boast. And you think to shame us because we do not share your guilt.

You are mistaken. We are without shame and without regret. When this nightmare passes away we shall still work to bring the nations together and you will still work to keep them asunder. You will discover some new foe with whom to play upon the fears of the

* There is no militarist party in Germany, and there never has been. On this subject, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, the famous English author, says: "Not that there was such a thing as a war party in Germany; this is one of the *Times's* falsehoods. There were, it is true, responsible statesmen and soldiers, who said, and with reason: if England and her allies want war at any price, the sooner the better. But the Kaiser, before his God, could not yield to this argument; the sword was returned to its scabbard."—ED.

public and through whom to stimulate your sales. But you will work in vain. In this war you have reached your zenith. The world that will emerge from this calamity will be a world that will belong to the democracy. *And the democracy knows you as the poisoner of the streams of human intercourse, the fomentor of war, the preacher of hate, the unscrupulous enemy of human society. It will make an end of many things, and among them it will make an end of the most sinister influence that has ever corrupted the soul of English journalism.*

I am, my lord, yours, etc.,

A. G. G.

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